PASTORAL CARE IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A Thesis

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by

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PREFACE

This study of the development of pastoral care in the Reformed tradition has been undertaken as an endeavor to make clear the nature of the ministry intended in the early years of the Church of Scotland and to make explicit the theological presuppositions upon which the ministry has been founded.

After an undergraduate education in engineering, a career as an officer in the line (executive branch) of the United States Navy, and preparation for the ministry of the Methodist Church in one of the theological seminaries of that denomination, the writer believed that the most beneficial study of the ministry and its work would be made beyond his own national and denominational traditions. With the guidance of the Reverend Professor W. S. Tindal, it was decided to examine the work of the ministry of the Church of Scotland prior to 1690 to determine how the Reformed theology was translated into the practice of pastoral care.

Although the Church of Scotland in the seventeenth century was the scene of prolonged and bitter strife over the form of church government, every effort has been made to avoid involvement in these disputes where they were not essential to an understanding of the pastoral care of the period. It will be shown that while the government of the Church of Scotland in the seventeenth century was sometimes Presbyterian, sometimes Epis-

copal, the work of the ministry, worship, and discipline of the Church were essentially uniform. The pastoral care described in this study should, therefore, be termed "Scottish" rather than "Presbyterian" or "Episcopal." Development and change in theory and practice of pastoral care during the period of study will be explained.

The writer wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance in the preparation of the study offered by the library staffs of Scotland, especially those of the National Library of Scotland and the libraries of the Universities. The occasional assistance of the Reverend Professor W. R. Forrester of St. Andrews and the late Very Reverend Professor G. D. Henderson of Aberdeen is highly valued. Of great assistance in the planning and execution of the study have been the Very Reverend Principal J. H. S. Burleigh and the Reverend Professor W. S. Tindal.

Appreciation is expressed for the financial assistance provided by the Ethredge Foundation of Augusta, Georgia, my parents, and by the people of the United States through the Veterans Administration. Mention must also be made of the many kindnesses extended by numerous Scottish and English friends in the churches, Scout movement, and the hobby of model railroading, throughout the period of study.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BOD.- The Book of Discipline
II BOD.- The Second Book of Discipline
BUKS.- The Booke of the Universall Kirke of Scotland
H. M. GRH.- H. M. General Register House, Edinburgh
NLS.- National Library of Scotland

The spelling in quotations has been, in most cases, modernized.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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The Responsibility of the Church

The Church Defined.- The Church, according to the standards with which the Church of Scotland began the seventeenth century, was sometimes considered to consist of all those who profess faith in Jesus Christ (the Church visible). The Church invisible was considered to consist of the elect only. A third definition of the Church held that it consisted only of those who hold its offices. "The kirk in this last sense," it was declared, "has a certain power granted by God, according to the which, it uses a proper jurisdiction and government, exercised to the comfort of the whole kirk."[1] In other words, the Church as a governing body existed in and through its officers. The idea of a democratic form of church government is not to be found in the early Church of Scotland.

The Mission of the Church.- The mission of the Church, as understood by the early Scottish Church, was the spiritual government of those within its geographic bounds. The meaning of "Church

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[1]Church of Scotland, Second Book of Discipline, i,1ff., Alexander Peterkin, The Booke of the Universall Kirke of Scotland, Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Printing and Publishing Co., 1839, p. 537; cf. Confession of Faith (1560), xvi, John Knox, The Works of John Knox, ed. David Laing (6 vols.; Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1846, II, pp. 108f.

government" was not, simply, the administration of ecclesiastical affairs, but the extensive spiritual oversight of the members of the flock, similar to the temporal oversight of the national society by the civil government.[1] No responsibility was felt for those beyond the national borders, although the Church as a whole recognized its responsibility to provide every parish within the realm with a Reformed church and a school.[2]

The Scottish Church was divided into parishes, usually along the lines established by its Roman predecessor. Parishes were organized into regional groups, eventually called presbyteries, which were in turn combined to form synods, the whole constituting the General Assembly. The church courts of the parish, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly were hierarchical in their relationships, the higher court having jurisdiction over the lower.[3] The authority of the Church is exercised by Jesus Christ, its only head, through the forms understood to be prescribed expressly by Him in scripture.[4] Scriptural forms were held to be the church courts and the offices of pastor, doctor, elder, and deacon. Church government, or spiritual oversight was sometimes to be exercised individually, chiefly by the ministers, at other times corporately "by mutual consent of them that bear office and charge."[5] The principal means of

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[1] Second Book of Discipline, i.9.

[2] Ibid., vii.35; Church of Scotland, Book of Discipline, John Knox, Op. Cit., II, pp. 202, 209.

[3] Second Book of Discipline, vii.

[4] Ibid., i.10ff, ii.4ff.

[5] Ibid., i.7.

church government were the preaching of the Word, with the associated administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of church discipline, all of which were for the spiritual benefit of the elect.[1] The Church itself could not provide or bring about salvation - God alone could do that - but operated externally to remove the impediments to salvation, while the Holy Spirit worked internally to bring about regeneration and salvation of the elect. Some of the impediments to salvation to which the Church directed its attention were ignorance, self-confidence, and faulty performance. Although these labors of the Church were considered efficacious for the elect only, because of the special working of the Holy Spirit, spiritual oversight, or pastoral care, was extended to all within the geographical limits of the Church, since God alone can judge the reprobation of an individual. The most notorious sinner in the parish could well prove to be one of the elect whose regeneration had not yet been brought about. It behoøved the Church and its ministry never to give up hope for the regeneration of any individual so long as life remained. Within this framework of spiritual oversight, the minister's task was the cure of souls, not by incantations or sleight of hand, but by constantly applying the Word of God as opportunity demanded. Although the elder, especially in connection with his membership on the kirk session, and others had limited responsibilities for cure of souls, the minister was the only member of the parish who had

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[1]The concepts expressed in the balance of this paragraph will be enlarged below.

no other responsibility, such as earning a livelihood, except the spiritual welfare of each person within his parish. The ministry of the Word included preaching, administration of the sacraments, catechising, and private conference, all of which were to offer Christ to the otherwise lost sinner and to demand obedience to the will of God. In the event that an individual failed to obey the demands of the Word, or sought to escape its proclamation, the Church felt responsible for his conduct and sought to correct it through church discipline.

Pastoral Care in the Pre-Reformation Church

In the pre-Reformation Scottish Church, spiritual oversight was exercised by the clergy, chiefly through the administration of the sacraments.[1] Since the Reformers had grown up in the Roman faith and many had been in Roman orders, it was natural that some Roman pastoral practices would be carried forward into the new Church. The Reformers continued to use two sacraments, preaching, and visitation, although the basis and significance of these acts were reinterpreted.

From the standpoint of pastoral care, the most serious failure of the Roman Church was its neglect of the parish as an institution. Financial resources of the parishes were appropriated for the support of monastic houses, the episcopacy, cathedrals, and collegiate churches. It has been estimated that by the time of the Reformation eighty-five per cent of the thousand

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[1]James L. Ainslie, The Doctrine of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1940, p. 34.

parishes of Scotland had been deprived of their incomes.[1] The clergy of the parishes were ignorant, the pittance allowed them failing to attract more capable men. The inadequate income of the vicar was often supplemented by obtaining pluralities, taking secular employment, or exacting charges for services. Of the latter, the most resented seems to have been the fees charged for funerals. Another result of the depletion of the parish resources was that many church buildings became ruinous. The weakness of the parish, aggravated by the opulence of the prelacy and the indolence of the monks, discredited the pastoral care of the Roman Church in Scotland.[1]

The Genevan Reformation

Scottish Indebtedness.- The Scottish Reformed Church largely derived the theory and practice of its pastoral care from the Genevan Church. Although it was argued that the structure and function of the Scottish Church were based on nothing but Biblical commands, in fact, the same conclusions about the Church were drawn by the Scottish Church from the scripture as had been drawn by the Genevan Church.

The Ministry.- The greatest task of the ministry, according to the Genevan understanding of the nature and mission of the Church, is the proclamation of the Word of God to the Church and its members through preaching and the administration of the sac-

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[1]I. B. Cowan, cited by Gordon Donaldson, The Scottish Reformation, Cambridge, University Press, 1960, p.12; Cf. John Cunningham, The Church History of Scotland (2 vols.; Edinburgh, James Thin, 1882, I, p. 79.

[2]Donaldson, Op. Cit., pp. 12ff.; Cunningham, Op. Cit., Chap. ix.

raments. Christ gives his gifts to the Church, exhibiting Himself "as in a manner actually present by exerting the energy of his Spirit in the ministerial office." By this office the saints are renewed, the body of Christ is edified, "we grow up in all things unto Him who is the head, and unite with one another."[1] Calvin argued that the ministry could not be dispensed with, "for neither are the light and heat of the sun, nor meat nor drink, so necessary to sustain and cherish the present life, as the apostolic and pastoral office to preserve a church in the earth."[2] Instead of perfecting his people in a moment, as He might have done, God chose to bring them to spiritual manhood by the education of the Church, that is, through "the preaching of celestial doctrine...committed to pastors."[3] The congregation must listen to the minister as to God Himself.[4] The audible words of the minister must conform to the written Word of the scripture, but it is the Holy Spirit, rather than the minister, Who conveys the Word to the hearer.[5] Calvin explained the process by which the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments effect a union of the hearer or communicant with Christ "most powerfully and truly, so that we become flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone," receiving eternal life from his vivifying flesh,[6] as follows:

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[1]John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. Henry Beveridge (2 vols.; London: James Clarke, N.D., IV.iii.2.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid., IV.i.5.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid., IV.i.6, xiv.10f.

[6]"Summary of Doctrine Concerning the Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments," Calvin: Theological Treatises, trans. J. K. S. Reid, London: SCM Press, 1954, sects. ii, iv.

> In the preaching of the Word, the external minister holds forth the vocal word, and it is received by the ears. The internal minister, the Holy Spirit, truly communicates the thing proclaimed through the Word, that is Christ, to the souls of all who will, so that it is not necessary that Christ or for that matter his Word be received through the organs of the body, but the Holy Spirit effects this union by his secret virtue, by creating faith in us, by which he makes us living members of Christ, true God and true man.[1]

In terms similar to those used by Luther to describe the presence of Christ in communion, the Genevan Reformation described the presence of Christ in preaching. Under the form of the "external minister," the Holy Ghost communicates the Christ, the Word of God, under the form of the spoken words of the minister. The benefits of Christ, therefore, are presented to the hearer of the preached Word neither by the preacher nor the force of his logic, but by the Holy Spirit, using the preaching of the Word by a minister as the means through which he enters the soul to perform the work of salvation, when the mind concurrently receives the preached Word in human terms.

It must be emphasised that the central act of pastoral care in Reformed thought was the preaching of the Word, together with the related administration of the sacraments.[2] Preaching was regarded as the validation of the ministry[3] and the distinguishing mark of the Church.[4] All other functions were seen as related to the preaching of the Word. Important as they were, the sacraments could not be administered independent of preach-

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[1] Ibid., vi. [2] Ibid., iv.

[3] "The Genevan Confession," Reid, Op. Cit., sect. xx.

[4] Institutes, IV.i.9.

ing, "the sacrament being added as a kind of appendix...confirming and sealing the promise" made in the preached Word.[1] Calvin regarded preaching as the only means of pastoral care used by Jesus and, therefore, the only means appropriate to the Church. Although he could not imagine that God was limited in the "external means" of pastoral care, he felt that He had confined the labors of the Church, in offering salvation, to preaching, the "ordinary method of teaching of Jesus."[2] Should this passage be taken out of context, the conclusion might be drawn that Calvin felt that the ministerial office was limited to the pulpit, but Calvin goes on to state other explicit duties of the office, insisting that "the method of teaching consists not merely in public addresses," but extends to house to house visitation,[3] admonition of individuals,[4] visitation of the sick and of prisoners, and catechising of children.[5]

Other Officers of the Church.- The office of minister was necessary in the Church in order that the Word might be truly preached; the office of elder stemmed from the need for orderly government of the Church.[6] Calvin held that the principal part of government was the exercise of discipline.[7] The minister and

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[1] Ibid., IV.xiv.3f.

[2] Ibid., IV.i.5.

[3] Ibid., IV.i.22.

[4] Ibid., IV.iii.6.

[5] "Draft Ecclesiastical Ordinances," Reid, Op. Cit, p. 58.

[6] John H. S. Burleigh, "The Eldership: Historical Study," Appendix iv., Relations between Anglican and Presbyterian Churches (Edinburgh: St. Andrews Press, 1957, p. 43; Cf. G. D. Henderson, The Scottish Ruling Elder (London, James Clarke, 1935, p. 25.

the elder were closely associated,[1] in that discipline was to be exercised as the means whereby the demands of the Word might be made normative in the lives of the auditors.[2] Discipline, like preaching, was understood to derive its force from the "might of the Word of God."[3] Since the purpose of discipline, exercised through church courts largely composed of elders, was not to coerce or punish, but to induce penitence, the office of elder as intended by Calvin, was to be an instrument of pastoral care.[4] Deacons, holders of the third perpetual office in the Church, were divided into two categories by Calvin, one to administer alms, the other responsible for the care of the poor and the sick.[5]

The Effect of Pastoral Care upon the Church as a Whole.- Through pastoral care Calvin sought more than the salvation of elect individuals. Through the system of church government just described, he expected that the Church would become a sort of elect society.

> The church of the future would not originate nor survive by legalistic means, nor through the punctual fulfilment of traditional ceremonies, but through the struggle for unity and freedom in obedience and surrender to the Lord of the Church. Calvin demands from everyone not that they should rest on the solitary confession of baptism, nor that they should be convinced of being once-for-all implanted through baptism into the great church of the people, which would then, as such, take under its care the weal or woe of its individual members; but that

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[1] Burleigh, Op. Cit., p. 45. [2] Institutes, IV.xi.5.

[3] Ibid. [4] Ibid., IV.xi.3, IV.xii.1.

[5] Burleigh, Loc. Cit.

> they should consider it as their essential duty, inseparably bound up with the right of membership bestowed in baptism, to turn the people's church more and more into a confessional church, to work for its upbuilding, to aim at the education of the young, and religious instruction, the goal being the attainment of maturity.[1]

For Calvin, then, pastoral care was exercised in the Church by the Holy Spirit through the officers of the Church, especially the ministers, and, to the extent just described, through the Church as a whole.

The Sixteenth Century Church of Scotland

Pastoral Organization.- When the Church in Scotland was reformed, the distinguishing marks of the true Church were held to be the true preaching of the Word of God, the administration of the sacraments, and ecclesiastical discipline.[2] In order to carry out these and other responsibilities for pastoral care, the Church of Scotland at its inception recognized four types of ecclesiastical officers and four types of church courts. The ecclesiastical officers provided for were minister, doctor, elder, and deacon. Church courts were the consistory, the exercise, the superintendent's council, and the General Assembly.

The Second Book of Discipline, introduced in 1577, adopted by the General Assembly in 1581, and established by parliament in 1592,[3] reconsidered the Church's structure. The offices

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[1]Josef Bohatec, Calvins Lehre von Staat und Kirche, Breslau: M. & H. Marcus, 1937, pp. 344f.

[2]Scots Confession, xviii.

[3]Janet G. MacGregor, Scottish Presbyterian Polity, Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1926, pp. 107f.

of superintendent and reader, actually parts of the ministry,[1] were abandoned. No significant changes were made with regard to the offices of minister and elder, nor were the duties of the church courts altered. The office of deacon was more clearly defined and distinguished from that of elder, while the office of doctor was differentiated from that of the minister.[2]

The Ministry.- Evidence indicates that the ministry intended by the Scottish Reformers was the same as that instituted by the Genevan Church,[3] although the Scottish Reformation set forth no well developed doctrine of the office. From its beginning, the Scottish Reformed Church affirmed the Genevan principle that the preaching of the Word is the empowering essential of the ministry.[4] The administration of the sacraments was entrusted to the ministry and understood to be dependent upon, and required to follow immediately, the preaching of the Word.[5] Duties in addition to these followed the Genevan example,[6] with special emphasis placed upon the minister's responsibility to see that church discipline be carried out.[7] The office of doctor, distinct from, but related to, the ministry, was ill-defined and vaguely limited to instructing in sound doctrine.[8]

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[1]The reader was not, strictly speaking, a part of the ministry, but took the place of the minister in places where qualified men were not available. The pastoral responsibilities of the reader were quite limited, since they were forbidden to preach or administer the sacraments.

[2]ii ff.

[3]MacGregor, Op. Cit., p. 25.

[4]Scots Confession, xviii.

[5]BOD, ii.

[6]BUKS, p. 13.

[7]Scots Confession, xxviii.

[8]BUKS, pp. 143f.

The Second Book of Discipline clarified but did not fundamentally change the nature of the ministerial office. The section on the ministry, although it does not go into the reasons for the various duties of the ministry, provides the most detailed description to be found in sixteenth century Scotland of the duties to be performed by the ministry. The most important duty is the "teaching of the word of God, in season and out of season, publicly and privately, always travailing to edify and discharge his conscience." The provision for teaching was not limited to formal worship services, but was extended, by implication, to all phases of the minister's life and work, although the preaching of the Word in formal services was the most important part of the minister's work. Both teaching and the administration of the sacraments were to be performed exclusively by the ministry, "for both are appointed by God as means to teach us; the one by the ear, the other by the eyes and other senses, that by both, knowledge may be transferred to the mind." The minister was expected to pray for the people, especially for the flock committed to his charge, "and to bless them in the name of the Lord, who will not suffer the blessings of his faithful servant to be frustrated." The writers contended that public prayer and the pronouncement of the benediction were restricted to the ministry for the same reasons that preaching and the sacraments were the exclusive concern of the ministry. These reasons are not explicitly stated, but the implication is that the offering of prayer and the pronouncement of the blessing were

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[1] iv.

considered to be forms of teaching of the Word. The minister was to scrutinize the conduct of his flock, not only that he might deal privately to reprehend the dissolute and encourage the godly, but that his sermons, from his knowledge of the lives of his parishioners, could be directed to their immediate needs. Authority for performing marriages was given to the minister, but because of the prevalence of clandestine marriages, administrative control was vested in the session, without whose permission the minister was not to perform any marriage. In the solemnization of marriage, the minister was "to pronounce the blessing of the Lord on them that enter in the holy band in the fear of the Lord." This, too, was considered a part of the teaching office. The minister was also responsible, under the direction of the session, for pronouncing the sentence of binding or loosing upon anyone designated by the session, according to the power of the keys." In addition, it was expected that the minister would make all pronouncements to the congregation concerning ecclesiastical affairs, "for he is a messenger and herald between God and the people in all these affairs." The most significant feature of this description of the task of the minister is that all the duties mentioned are understood to be directly related to the minister's unique position as custodian of the Word of God.

The Eldership.- The earliest Scottish eldership, which predates the Reformation, was unsystematised and spontaneous compared with that of the Genevan Church. The earliest evidences of the eldership in Scotland show it "engaged upon the practical work

of watching over the flock of Christ, correcting abuses, and reforming manners" and otherwise exercising that spiritual government intended to knit society into an ordered whole.[1] The Scottish Reformation assumed, in 1560, the necessity for and existence of an eldership whose essential task was the exercise of discipline through church courts.[2] The term of office was, at first, one year with the possibility of re-election,[3] but was soon changed to life tenure.[4] In addition to their responsibilities as members of church courts, elders were assigned personal duties. It is probable, according to G. D. Henderson, that from the outset of the Scottish Reformation many parishes were divided into districts served by specified elders.[5] Elders were expected, in general, to perform the same pastoral tasks as the ministers, except that they were forbidden to preach the Word or administer the sacraments.[6] They were to assist the minister in examination of communicants, visitation of the sick, and the admonition of all men of their duties, "according to the rule of the Evangel."[7]

The Diaconate.- In the Church of Scotland, the deacon has been from the first the financial agent of the Church, subservient to the church courts. At first, deacons were members of the ses-

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[1]Ivo MacNaughton Clark, A History of Church Discipline in Scotland, Aberdeen: W. & W. Lindsay, 1929, p. 57.

[2]Henderson, op. cit., p. 37; cf. Burleigh, op. cit., p. 44.

[3]BOD, viii.

[4]II BOD, vi.6.

[5]Op. cit., p. 30.

[6]BOD, viii.

[7]II BOD, vi.13ff.

sion and were permitted to serve as readers.[1] The Second Book of Discipline removed the deacon from the session and confined his activities to those financial activities directed by his session.[2] Subsequent exercise of the office was limited both in dignity and diversity.

The Seventeenth Century View of the Ministry

The First Half-century.- Although the government of the Church of Scotland was sometimes Presbyterian, sometimes Episcopal, there was little variation in the understanding and practice of pastoral care. What the Church intended to be the labors of its ministers may be seen in the instructions given by the General Assembly of 1602 to presbyteries for the visitation or inspection of the work of individual ministers. According to these instructions, the minister was to preach once or twice on the Sunday and, possibly, at other times. Communion, preceded by due examination of the parishioners, was to be celebrated once a year. Weekly, he was to meet with his session for the exercise of discipline and catechising a part of the parish. Sick and distressed parishioners were to be visited when occasion required, while he was to carry out "an ordinary visitation of some families of his congregation weekly." All disputes that fell out in the congregation were to be settled by the minister. He was to be resident, in contrast with the pre-Reformation absent beneficiary, living upon his manse and glebe, and was so to conduct his life and manage his family that his flock would

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[1] BOD, viii. [2] vi, viii.

be edified by what they observed.[1]

During the First Episcopacy, Bishop John Forbes of Aberdeen described the parish ministry in similar terms. Specific tasks of the ministry were held to be preaching, administration of the sacraments, care of the poor, ecclesiastical discipline, visitation of families, and counselling. The last two of which were described as forms of preaching.[2]

When Presbyterian government was restored to the Church, Alexander Henderson, the most influential minister of the period immediately following the signing of the National Covenant, described the role of the minister in an unofficial but authoritative statement. Henderson understood the work of the ministry to be concentrated in the teaching of the Word. Besides the public means, preaching and administration of the sacraments, he held that catechising, visitation of families "for trying the manners of the people, whether they walk worthy of the Gospel, for setting and holding religious exercise in families," and the examination of parishioners before communion were opportunities for proclaiming the Word of God.[3]

After the Meeting of the Westminster Assembly.- Adoption of the Westminster standards as the rule for the Scottish occasioned little change from the provisions of the Second Book of Disci-

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[1]BUKS, p. 517.

[2]"De Cura et Residentia Pastorali," Opera Omnia, ed. George Garden, Amsterdam: Henricum Wetstenium and Rod. and Gerh. Wetstenios, 1703, ix.2f.

[3]The Government and Order of the Church of Scotland, Edinburgh: James Bryson, 1641, pp. 17f.

pline or from existing Scottish practice. The "Form of Church Government" gave as officers of individual congregations, ministers, church governors (elders), and deacons, making provision for their meeting together as a session, with the minister as moderator.[1] The minister was expected "to feed the flock, by preaching of the word, according to which he is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort, and comfort." He was to pray for and with his flock, as the mouth of the people unto God," to read the scripture publicly, to catechise (as a part of teaching of the Word), to administer the sacraments and to dispense other divine mysteries, to bless the people from God, to care for the poor, and to exercise " a ruling power over the flock as a pastor."[2] It is to be noted that, except for the responsibility for care of the poor, more logically assigned to the session and the diaconate, the duties of the minister are those given by the Second Book of Discipline.

The MS diary of an unidentified minister of the 1650's contains this general description of his work:

> Teaching and preaching twice on the Lord's Day, preaching on Tuesday and Friday weekly, two diets of catechising in the town, and one in the landward weekly, beside visitation of families and of the sick, and attendance upon the exercise of discipline.[3]

During the second Episcopacy, much was published giving

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[1] Subordinate Standards of the Free Church of Scotland, Edinburgh: Free Church of Scotland, 1955, pp. 172, 175f.

[2] Ibid., 172f.

[3] "Notebook of Mr William Scott, Minister at Cupar Fife," H. M. GRH, Leven and Melville Muniments, x.2. The author is not the William Scott of Cupar described by Fasti as being of some means, having an assistant, and dying in 1642. This MS indicates the author is without funds, in need of an assistant and alive in 1656.

opposing views of the nature of the Church and its ministry. Most of these documents were political and polemical, providing no information relative to pastoral care.[1] Even the "Queensferry Paper" of 1690, which of all Presbyterian tracts of the period contains the most explicit view of the ministry, expressed its views in terms intended to incite the reader against the Episcopal establishment. The work of the ministry, "appointed by Christ to continue in the Church until the end of the world," is to preach the Word and administer the sacraments. Ministers were further required "to preach, propagate, and defend the kingdom of God," and preserve its "doctrine, worship, discipline, government, liberties and privileges."[2] By "the kingdom of God" is meant, of course, the Presbyterian form of church government.

A proclamation by Charles II included in the tasks of the ministry celebration "of the day of His Majesty's most happy birth and Restoration," preaching, administration of the sacraments, execution of church discipline, solemnization of marriage, and the registration of baptisms, marriages, and burials.[3] Stripped of their polemical overlays, these statements show that both parties expected essentially the same pastoral ministry.

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[1] "The literature which survives from Covenanting times is also very large and is extreme, biassed, often venomous, often savage, all requiring to be studied with extreme care," G. D. Henderson, Religious Life in Seventeenth-century Scotland, Cambridge: University Press, 1937, p. 158.

[2] J. C. Johnson, Treasury of the Scottish Covenant, Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1887, pp. 139ff.

[3] Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MSS "D" 142.633.

It is interesting to note also that party affiliations of the minister are rarely apparent from kirk session minutes. Apparently, pastoral care continued essentially unchanged by the upheavals of the century, although disrupted in some parishes with the fortunes of the incumbent.

After the Revolution, all ministers with either Episcopal or Presbyterial ordination were recognized by the reconstituted Church, provided they signed the Westminster Confession of Faith and submitted to the Presbyterian form of church government.[1]

Some Seventeenth Century Ministerial Calls

The expressed attitudes of congregations towards their ministers varied from savage to sympathetic,[2] generally reflecting the current relationship between minister and congregation rather than an understanding of the principles of pastoral care. The records of such relationships are mostly useful indications of the overt responses to the labors of the ministry in specific situations. An outstanding example of well-received ministerial efforts occurred January 6, 1646, when the congregation of the First Charge, South Leith petitioned their synod and patron to have Alexander Gibson, minister of the Second Charge, assigned to them. In giving their reasons for desiring his appointment, neither his ability to preach nor his diligence in administering

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[1]Cunningham, Op. Cit., II, pp. 175f.

[2]For records of individual ministers, see Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae, ed. Hew Scott (8 vols.; Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1928, 1950.

the sacraments was mentioned. Indeed, the whole theory of pastoral care seems to have been overlooked by the framers of the petition. A more concrete expression of their regard for him took the form of a grant by the congregation of the church on May 9, 1647, of eight hundred merks, in addition to his regular stipend, for serving the first charge for two years and for his "special pains" in ministering to the two congregations of South Leith during the plague.[1]

Of much more value in determining the popular estimate of the nature of the ministry are the extant ministerial calls of the century. There is no evidence of the use of fixed forms for calls until after the seventeenth century. A call, therefore, would to some degree reflect what a congregation thought of the ministry as well as what it expected its minister to undertake. It is feared that should these documents be paraphrased much of the spirit in which they were written would be lost. Four examples will be presented here in full, with the original spelling.

A Call to William Guthrie from Fenwick Parish.-

> Reverend & Wellbeloved
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> We underscribers Heritors and remanent Parishioners of the new Kirk of Kilmarnock calling to mind how (after many prayers and difficulties) by the great Mercy and good Hand of God upon us, a needful and hungry people considering also how the same Lord hath (since) prospered the work of edific[ation] in our hands and brought it towards the headstone, have found ourselves bound in conscience and pressed in spirit to make use of so fair a mercy by begging from God and seeking out (in the ordinary way) one who may break the Bread of Life unto us,

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[1] Ibid., I, p. 166.

and watch for our souls: and now after the using of our best endeavours to hear divers proposants for the ministry, It hath pleased the Lord to incline all our hearts as one man towards you and in his Name to charge you to accept of our call for the Ministry at this place which we give you upon the knowledge and good hopes of your Fitness for the Lords work and our condition, and seeing that (upon Knowledge and in the way of God and allowed by this Kirk) did ever call you, and you are the first after whom the Eyes and Hearts of us all have been caryed with a holy violence and this is the first call that ever came from this place, we rest assured that you neither dare nor will refuse the burden, but will run in unto your and our Lord with it, and so refresh the Hearts of a waiting longing and languishing people by a ready condescendance, assuring yourself of the Ready obedience and all the encouragements that in reason can be expected, and which they shall be enabled to give, who are and resolve to be

Your very affectionat friends
and Flock S.S.

From the new Kirk of Kilmarnock
27 of September 1643

(Signed by six heritors and about 160 others)[1]

The duties of the ministry specified in this call are the breaking of the Bread of life and the watching for the souls of the flock, yet the statement of these duties is really by way of prologue, possibly using set phrases commonly found in calls of this period. The emphasis of the call is upon the overall task facing the recipient of the call. It was explained that the parish had been newly formed and that the congregation would like to have William Guthrie to lead them in transforming the Newkirk of Kilmarnock into an effective unit of the Church visible. A manse would have to be built, as well as a church, and the minister would be expected to develop a new society and many new lives. Although couched in terminology that may today seem flowery, Guthrie's call is notable for its simplicity.

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[1]Letter "C," appended to "A Letter from One of Mr Guthries Relations, to the Publisher Containing Some Account of his Life," NLS, Wodrow MSS, Folio xlix.18.

A Call to Thomas Wyllie from Fenwick Parish.-

Right Reverend

The parish of Fenwick being vacand by reason of the demiss of our last minister, Mr William Guthrie of blessed memory; and we being not only sensible of the many sad effects of this long vacancie bot also judging it very necessary in order to the propagation of the Gospell, and the salvation of souls among us that some able and godly minister sould be invited to come over and help us, and labour in the Word of the Lord among us; and We being most acquainted with the abilities and qualifications of you My Thomas Wyllie minister of the Gospell, by these pnts, doe most cordiallie intreat, call and invite you, to come, and labour among us in your maisters work; in the doeing whereof as we are very hopfull that you as a servant of Jesus Christ sall prove very instrumental throw the blessing of God to advance your maisters work, and our good; So we faithfully promise that we sall be concurring and assisting you according to our power, for helping forward the work of the ministry of the Gospell, and for strengthening your hands therein, In testimony whereof, We underscribours for ourselves, and in mame of almost our whole congregation have affixed these pnts.

The Church of Fennick
March 21, 1673
(63 signatures)[1]

Wyllie succeeded to the charge in the following November. A remarkable feature of the settlement is the call which follows.

A Call of Fenwick Parish.-

Reverend

We the underscribors with many others in this Towne and Congregation, being (we Trust) of the desolate and deplorable condition we are into, by reason of our so long want of a faithful overseer settled among us; to watch over our souls rightly dividing the word of truth; a sent minister and steward of the mysteries of God; bringing forth things new and old, giving one their portion of meat in due season that we might in this dark and evil time hear a word crying behind us; this is the way, walk ye in it, when we turn to the right hand and when we turn to the left. And now finding to our great

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[1]NLS, Wodrow MSS, Folio xxxii.110.

griefe that our expectation of worthy Mr Wylie's settling among us are frustrate, he declaring unto us his unclearness and desiring us to put upon another, We doe therefore unanimously invite and call you_____ Minister of the Gospel to be our minister, willingly taking the oversight of us the flock of Christ in this place aforesaid. We are hopefull the Lord you have to spend and be spent in your masters service, the free and open Doore that waits here for you. The great need and necessity of your coming over to help us, the expectation we have of your kindly acceptance in this place, and usefullness in the worke of the Gospell amongst us, and the expectation you may have, of our ready and chearfull subjection in the Lord in the exercise of Doctrine worship, Discipline and Government according to the rules and laws of his owne house, together with all due and competent encouragement externall that soe you may do your work with Joy and not with griefe, which by these presents we doe engage ourselves for.

We are hopefull we say these things beine duly pondered by you that you shall be engaged to listen to this our serious and cordial call and if Mr Wylie's unclearness to return here should be any obstruction to your coming among us we are confident as to that he will satisfie you abundantly and truely that we knowe of nothing convenient within our power which we would not willingly have done for purchasing the so savoury and satisfying labours of that worthy man amongst us, whom we have now commissionate to press home this our call upon you, all which putes us in expectation of an successfull and happy result, thus waithing for your answer by the first occasion, and your owne persone, with all convenience and humbly beseeching the great Shepherd of the Sheep that he may cause you to come with fulness of your Blessings.

So,
Your afectionate friends,
(33 signatures)[1]

It is unfortunate that so much mystery surrounds this unusual document intended for a man obviously inferior in the estimation of the congregation to the man called upon to deliver it. The author is unknown, but there is more than a little likelihood that Wyllie had a hand in framing it since the language is quite different from the call addressed to him only a

[1]NLS, Wodrow MSS, Folio xxxii.111.

little earlier. In the space where there should be found the name of the person to whom the call was addressed there is nothing. Wodrow's opinion is that the intention was to have Wyllie fill in the name of a suitable minister. The accuracy of Wodrow's conjecture cannot be proved, but the call was included in the collection of Wyllie's papers that came into Wodrow's possession, indicating the probability that the call was never delivered.

From the standpoint of pastoral care, the language of the call is noteworthy, especially the image of the minister looking down upon the souls of the congregation, directing their paths by application of the Word: "This is the way, walk ye in it."

A Call to Alexander Ramsey from Old Kirk Parish Edinburgh.-

> Wee undersubscrybed heretoms parishoners and inhabitants in that Quarter of the Toune of Eyr commonly called the old kirk quarter or old Kirk parishine and others inhabitants of the same Burgh by (the Elders)
>
> Taking unto our consideratione that the care of our immortal soulls is oure chief and greatest concerne, withall duly respecting the Government and Lawes of the Nation and the condescensione and encouradgment mentioned in the Kings letters DOE heartily and unanimously call and invite Mr. Alexr. Ramsey one of the ministers of Eyr as being a person whom by experience wee know to be weel qualified and of a pious lyfe and conversatione to exercise his ministeriall function to us at that meeting house in Eyr commonly called the Taylors hall by preaching of the word, Administration of the sacraments, visiting the seek, doing all other things proper for him to doe in his stations. Assuring hereby the same Mr. Alexr. Ramsey of all our assistance, countenance, and encouradgement in the work of his ministry, Hee always in the discharge of his duty acting nothing which may be offensive to the government. Given under oure hande Att Eyr the 3rd, 4th, and 5th dayes of Appryll 1691.
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> (22 signatures)[1]

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[1]H.M. GRH, Misc. Ecclesiastical Document No. 126.

Alexander Ramsay was deprived of his charge September 10, 1689 for not praying for William and Mary, but praying for James VII and the bishops.[1] This call represents an attempt by some of his former parishioners to have him as their minister again. The duties he was expected to perform are stated more explicitly than usual, possibly to allay the suspicions of the authorities. There is no record of a congregation adhering to Ramsay after this date, but David Blair was admitted to the charge August 9, 1691[2]

Standardization of the Form of a Call.- Nearly twenty years after the Revolution, Steuart of Pardovan, regretting that the Church lacked fixed and established rules, recommended to the Church a form for a call:

> We the Heretors, Elders, and Magistrates of the Town-Council of_____being destitute of a fixed Pastor, and being most assured by good Information, and our own Experience of the Ministerial Abilities, Piety, Literature and Prudence, as also of the Suteableness to our Capacities of the Gifts of you Mr. A. B. Preacher of the Gospel, or Minister at C. have agreed, with the Advice and Consent of the Parish foresaid, and Concurrance of the Reverend Presbytery of D. to Invite, Call and Intreat. Likeas, We by these Presents, do heartily Invite, Call and Intreat you, to undertake the Office of a Pastor among us, and the charge of our Souls. And furder, upon your accepting of this our Call, promise you all dutyful Respect, Encouragement and Obedience in the Lord. In witness whereof, &c.[3]

The strong emphasis on the preached Word, so evident in the foregoing examples is no longer present in this early eighteenth century example, which is essentially the same as that used now.

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[1] Fasti, I, p. 71. [2] Ibid.

[3] Collections and Observations concerning the Worship, Discipline, and Government of the Church of Scotland, Edinburgh: J. Dickson and C. Elliot, 1773, p. 45.

Summary

The seventeenth century Church of Scotland, drawing heavily upon the theological resources of the Genevan Reformation, prescribed a system of pastoral care based upon the presence of Christ in the Word, and understood to be accomplished chiefly through the preaching of the Word, administration of the sacraments, and church discipline. Although some responsibility was assigned to elders and deacons, mostly in connection with the functions of the church courts, theological and practical considerations caused the minister to have the greatest responsibility for pastoral care.

CHAPTER II

THE USE OF DISCIPLINE AS A MEANS OF PASTORAL CARE

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Discipline Defined

Ecclesiastical discipline, as employed by the seventeenth century Church of Scotland, has been defined by Ivo MacNaughton Clark as "the corrective treatment of Church members, who are transgressors of its standards through ignorance or willfulness."[1] Through discipline, the Church hoped to bring about the restoration of the offender and to protect the purity of the Church and the glory of God.[2] Such treatment, which must be considered an integral part of the pastoral care of the period under study, was not an innovation of the Reformation, but had been practised by the Church from New Testament times.[3]

Roman Discipline in Scotland

Responsibility.- Before the Reformation, the responsibility for ecclesiastical discipline in Scotland rested with the Provincial council, an assembly of clergy under the Archbishop of St. Andrews or, before 1472, a bishop elected to preside. The council

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[1] A History of Church Discipline in Scotland, Aberdeen, W. & W. Lindsay, 1929, p. 1.

[2] Calvin, Institutes, Iv.xii.5.

[3] Clark, Op. Cit., pp. 1ff.; Cf. "penance," Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, ed. F. L. Cross, 1957, p. 1041.

adapted about 300 canons of the Roman Canon Law for use by the Scottish Church and exercised the discipline thus prescribed through the sacrament of penance, archdeacons' visitations, and bishops' courts.[1] The operation, including the corrective measures prescribed, of the courts of pre-Reformation archdeacons and bishops was similar to that of the Reformed session,[2] except that Roman discipline was exercised exclusively by the clergy, and membership in the courts was restricted to the clergy. It is impossible to judge accurately the value or effect of Roman discipline in Scotland. Penance was secret and left no records. The few remaining records of Roman church courts tell, necessarily, of clerical and lay failures. The weakness of Roman discipline was not that it made no impression on the morality of Scotland in the middle ages, but that, by putting the responsibility for discipline in the hands of the individual priest, archdeacon, or bishop, the impression was created that offenses against Christian morality and consequent discipline were neither the concern of the laity nor the responsibility of the Church as a whole.[3] This impression was strengthened by the system of dispensations, by which the Pope or a bishop could set aside certain standards of the church.[4] In short, the entire pre-Reformation disciplinary system, grounded on the judgement

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[1] Ibid., p. 40.

[2] Ibid., pp. 50f.; Cf. John Dowden, The Medieval Church in Scotland, Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, 1910, p. 27.

[3] Clark, Op. Cit., p. 55.

[4] "Dispensations," Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, pp. 406f.

and character of individuals, lent itself too readily to subversion by the unscrupulous and contributed significantly to popular repudiation of the Roman Church.[1]

The Sacrament of Penance.- In the Roman system, the mainstay of discipline and pastoral care as a whole was the sacrament of penance. Although archdeacons' and bishops' courts dealt with cases involving the clergy and notorious offenses of the laity, most spiritual oversight was exercised through the processes of penance. Briefly, the sacrament provided that each person should regularly confess his sins secretly to his own parish priest or to an ordained member of a religious order, and that divine forgiveness be pronounced by the cleric under specified conditions. The mechanics of the process required that the penitent, having felt a hearty sorrow for and detestation of his sin (contrition) or having feared divine punishment of his sin (attrition), confessed his sin to God in the presence of a priest (confession). The priest, who might ask the confessant such questions ~~that~~ as would assure him that all remembered sin had been confessed, then pronounced the forgiveness of those sins in the name of the Trinity (absolution), usually on condition of fulfillment of a punishment assigned by the priest (satisfaction), although it was sometimes possible to secure an alternative to the required punishment (indulgence).[2]

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[1]Clark, Op. Cit., p. 54.

[2]Heribert Jone, Moral Theology, trans. Urban Adelman, Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1953, pp. 388ff.

Calvin's Views on Penance

His Objections.- For Calvin, the ideas of repentance and forgiveness of sin - the sum of the Gospel[1] - were essential to the cure of souls. Unless the individual's knowledge of how sins are forgiven is clear and certain, he argued, his conscience "can have no rest at all, no peace with God, no confidence or security, but is continually trembling, fluctuating, boiling, and distracted; dreads, hates, and shuns the presence of God."[2] Although he advocated the use by the Church of confession and ministerial absolution, Calvin repudiated the Roman sacrament of penance on practical and theological grounds. In practice, it had given rise to shameful abuses in the Church. Theologically, he saw it as a contradiction of the divine plan of salvation, which did not depend on the actions of man. Basically, Calvin's objections were centered in the definition of poenitentia. The simple, Biblically required repentance (poenitentia), "a real conversion of our life unto God,"[3] had been distorted, he maintained, by "the sophistical jargon of the schoolmen," into a complex system of penitence (poenitentia).[4] Contrition he described as impossible of attainment because no man could sufficiently despise his sins to deserve forgiveness.[5] Satisfaction for sins confessed was more lengthily discussed, but the main objections were that it was inconsistent with both the Biblical doctrine of free pardon[6] and the fullness of the satisfaction

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[1] Institutes, III.iii.1

[2] Ibid., III.iv.2.

[3] Ibid., III.iii.5.

[4] Ibid., III.iv.

[5] Ibid., III.iv.2f.

[6] Ibid., III.iv.25.

for sin obtained by the sacrifice of Christ.[1]

Confession.- Calvin considered confession, of which he recognized three types, to be a Christian duty. It was proper, he said, that the congregation should, during the worship service, make a general confession of iniquity.[2] From the Biblical provision for confession to an injured neighbor,[3] he concluded that those guilty of notorious breach of the standards of the Church should, in consequence of their offending the congregation and as a part of the process of church discipline, confess their sin before the congregation in order that they might be reconciled.[4]

Calvin's attitude towards auricular confession, the third type he recognized, requires careful study. There is no doubt but that he condemned it, as in the following statement.

> It is not strange, therefore, that we condemn that auricular confession, as a thing pestilent in its nature, and in many ways injurious to the Church, and desire to see it abolished. But if the thing were in itself indifferent, yet seeing it is of no use or benefit, and has given occasion to so much impiety, blasphemy, and error, who does not think that it ought to be immediately abolished?...There is nothing which gives men greater confidence and license in sinning than the idea, that after making confession to priests, they can wipe their lips and say, I have not done it. And not only do they during the whole year become bolder in sin, but secure against confession for the remainder of it, they never sigh after God, never examine themselves, but continue heaping sins upon sins, until, as they suppose, they get rid of them all at once. And when they have got rid of it, they think they are disburdened of their load, and imagine they have deprived God of the right of judging, by giving it to the priest; have made God forgetful, by making the priest conscious.[5]

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[1] Ibid., III.iv.27.

[2] Ibid., III.iv.9ff.

[3] Matthew 5:23f.

[4] Institutes, III.iv.13.

[5] Ibid., III.iv.24.

It was not the idea of confession to a minister that Calvin condemned, but the Roman interpretation and abuse of such confession. By making forgiveness of sins dependent upon confession to a priest, the Romans were tyrannical and insulting to God. Forgiveness of sins, in which our salvation consists, belongs peculiarly to God and is bound to his Word, therefore free from human rule, he said.[1] In the same way he advocated the use of the sacraments, purged of Roman doctrine, Calvin urged the use of private confession to a minister, in effect, auricular confession, although he would never have used the term. In the following passage, Calvin stated his reasons for urging confession to a minister.

> Although James 5:16, by not specifying any particular individual into whose bosom we are to disburden our feelings, leaves us the free choice of confessing to any member of the church who may seem fittest; yet as for the most part pastors are to be supposed better qualified than others, our choice ought chiefly to fall upon them. And the ground of preference is, that the Lord, by calling them to the ministry, points them out as the persons by whose lips we are to be taught to subdue and correct our sins, and derive consolation from the hope of pardon. For as the duty of mutual admonition and correction is committed to all Christians, but is specially enjoined on ministers, so while we ought all to console each other mutually, and confirm each other in confidence in the divine mercy, we see that ministers, to assure our consciences of the forgiveness of sins, are appointed to be witnesses and sponsors of it, so that they are said to forgive sins and loose souls (Matth.xvi.19; xviii.18). When you hear this attributed to them, reflect that it is for your use. Let every believer, therefore, remember, that if in private he is so agonized and afflicted by a sense of his sins that he cannot obtain relief without the aid of others, it is his duty not to neglect the remedy which God provides for him - viz. to have recourse for relief to a private confession to his own pastor, and for consolation privately implore the assistance of him whose business it is, both in public and private, to

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[1] Ibid., III.iv.24.

solace the people of God with Gospel doctrine.[1]

To prevent the abuses of confession that had arisen under the Roman system, Calvin prescribed the following rules:

> Confession of this nature ought to be free so as not to be exacted of all, but only recommended to those who feel that they have need of it; and secondly even those who use it according to their necessity must neither be compelled by any precept, nor artfully induced to enumerate all their sins, but only in so far as they shall deem it for their interest, that they may obtain the full benefit of consolation.[2]

Absolution.- Calvin recognized three occasions when absolution should be pronounced by the minister. First, when the entire congregation, "in a formal acknowledgment of its defects, supplicate pardon," it is fitting that the minister absolve the church. As he explained it, when the congregation stands as it were before the bar of God, confesses her guilt, and finds refuge only in the divine mercy, "it is no common or light solace to have an ambassador of Christ present, invested with the mandate of reconciliation, by whom she may hear her absolution pronounced." Too, when those who have offended the Church by a public breach of its standards have satisfied the provisions of church discipline, receive pardon, and are restored to brotherly unity, "how great is the benefit of understanding that he is pardoned by those to whom Christ said, 'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.'" Finally, private absolution was to be given to those who ask for a special remedy for their infirmity.

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[1] Ibid., III.iv.12. [2] Ibid.

> It not seldom happens, that he who hears general promises which are intended for the whole congregation of the faithful, nevertheless remains somewhat in doubt, and is still disquieted in mind, as if his own remission were not yet obtained. Should this individual lay open the secret wound of his soul to his pastor, and hear these words of the Gospel specially addressed to him, "Son be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matth. ix.2), his mind will feel secure, and escape from the trepidation with which it was previously agitated.[1]

For Calvin, absolution was not the forgiveness of sin, an act reserved to God alone, but the declaration of sin forgiven. The minister, herald of God, was to stand before the penitent as a witness and surety[2] for God's forgiveness made certain in his Word. The Word specified who is bound and who is loosed. By the Word preachers of the Gospel are enabled to promise forgiveness of sins to "all who are in Christ by faith," and to declare a sentence of condemnation against all "who do not embrace Christ."[3] The minister cannot err when, "in the capacity of a herald, he promulgates what has been dictated to him from the word of God." Calvin strongly warned against dreaming of any power of the keys apart from the preaching of the Gospel. Whatever power of binding and loosing bestowed by Christ upon the Church "is annexed to the Word." The whole power of the ministry of the keys was described by Calvin as the grace of the Gospel "publicly and privately sealed on the minds of believers" by ministers; and the only method in which this can be done is by preaching."[4] The sinner to whom absolution is addressed receives a clear and sure absolution by trusting "that God is propi-

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[1] Ibid., III.iv.14.

[2] Max Thurian, Confession, London; SCM Press, 1958, pp. 33ff.

[3] Institutes, III.iv.21.

[4] Ibid., III.iv.14.

tious to him, provided he sincerely seek expiation in the sacrifice of Christ, and accept of the grace offered to him."[1] In the same way that the benefits of the Lord's Supper are received by faith,[2] the reception of absolution depends on faith and repentance, in response to the Word proclaimed.[3]

Absolution not a Sacrament.- Max Thurian, in a volume designed to encourage Protestant use of confession and absolution, maintains that in Calvin one finds the authentic tradition of the sacrament of absolution.[4] Calvin's only formal objection was that it lacked a materia, but his real purpose, according to Thurian, in denying a sacramental value in penance was the protection of the people from sacramental superstition and magic.[5] Thurian's argument that Calvin considered absolution to be equivalent to a sacrament is based on Calvin's statement that the whole force and meaning of the ministry of the keys "consists in this, that the grace of the Gospel should be confirmed and sealed, as it were, in public as well as in private, by those whom God has ordained to this office; which cannot be done but by preaching alone."[6] It is not absolution , as Thurian insists, but the Word[7] itself which is the seal and confirmation.

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[1] Institutes, III,iv.21. [2] Ibid., IV.xvii.5.

[3] Ibid., III.iv.18,22. [4] Op. Cit., pp. 34f.

[5] Ibid., p. 35.

[6] Institutes, III.iv.14, cited by Thurian, Op. Cit,, p. 36.

[7] Institutes, I.vii.5.

Calvin objected to the belief that penance or absolution might be a sacrament because "it is not an external ceremony appointed by God for the confirmation of our faith."[1] Neither was there an external, visible, or carnal sign involved,[2] nor a divinely required ceremony apart from the preaching of the Word. Although Calvin favored both public and private absolution,[3] he denied that such absolution, however valuable, could be a sacrament. His views are summed up in this passage:

> ...the promise of the keys pertains not to the making of any particular state of absolution, but only to the preaching of the Gospel, whether it is made to several or to one only, without making any difference; that is to say, that by this promise our Lord does not found a special absolution which is given separately to each, but one which is given indifferently to all sinners, without particular application.[4]

In other words, the distinction Calvin made between a sacrament and absolution, both of which have the same purpose, is that a sacrament is attached to and visually reasserts the Word, while absolution is contained in the Word. Therefore, Thurian is mistaken in maintaining that the "sacrament of absolution" has the same relationship to the Word as have the two sacraments that were, in fact, recognized by Calvin. Thurian states that absolution is not "merely a form of preaching,"[5] again in error. Absolution as Calvin understood it, is not a form of preaching; it is preaching in all its forms. Not only in his discussion of penitence, but in speaking of the Word and

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[1] Ibid., IV.xix.15. [2] Ibid., IV.xiv.1,4,5,6,10 passim.

[3] Ibid., III.iv.14, IV.xix.14. [4] Ibid., IV.xix.17.

[5] Op. Cit., p. 35.

and the use of the keys, Calvin is adamant that the forgiveness, which is declared in absolution, is brought about by the Word alone. "Properly speaking," Calvin said, "Christ did not give this power to men but to his word, of which he made men the ministers."[1] It must not be overlooked that the minister was not only to loose the repentant sinner; he was also to admonish or rebuke the unrepentant. Both of these tasks were to be undertaken not on his own authority or even on the authority of his office; nor was his own judgement to be trusted. His power, his infallibility was that of the Word.

Role of the Minister in Church Discipline.- In the thought of Calvin, there is no separation of the minister's responsibility to preach the Word and his responsibility to rule the Church, that is, administer the discipline prescribed. At most, it might be said that there are two different aspects of a single responsibility, but even this is artificial. No such distinction is to be found in Calvin. The two responsibilities are coextensive. It is precisely here that is seen most clearly the nature of the minister's duties in the administration of church discipline. In discipline, or any other function, the minister executes his office as pastor only to the extent that he proclaims the Word of God.

The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.- Church government or use of the keys of the kingdom meant, broadly speaking, the whole of

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[1] Institutes, IV.xi.1.

pastoral care.[1] In a more technical sense, by this term Calvin meant the administration of exclesiastical discipline, of which he recognized two types. The binding and loosing to be performed by the ministry has been discussed. The second type of the use of the keys - by the eldership in church courts - put into practice the same power of binding and loosing,[2] the same command, the same promise as the first.[3] By their use of the keys, the eldership was to make a practical application of the "spiritual power of pastors."[4] Preaching obtains force, Calvin explained, "not only when the minister publicly expounds to all what they owe to Christ," but when the Church has the right and means of exacting payment of this debt from all those observed to be sluggish or disobedient to the preached Word.[5] If one rejects the minister's admonitions, "he is to be summoned before the bar of the Church, which is the consistory of the elders."[6]

In the same way that the pastor cannot err so long as he limits himself, in his ministry, to the Word, the consistory is infallible when the Word is the means by which they condemn the perverse or restore the penitent.[7] Only the Word could prescribe who would be bound by the eldership and who would be loosed. The courts were to take cognizance of notorious offenders whose unchallenged presence in the Church would be an insult to Christ. ~~Too,~~ They were also to deal with those who refused

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[1] Ibid., IV.i.21.

[2] Viz., by the word of God.

[3] Institutes, IV.xi.2.

[4] Ibid., IV.xi.5.

[5] Ibid., IV.xii.2.

[6] Ibid., IV.xii.2.

[7] Ibid., IV.xi.2.

to be edified by private admonition. For the correction of offenders, the church courts could admonish sharply, debar from communion, or, in an extreme care, excommunicate.[1] Since the Church has no right of the sword to punish or restrain corporially, its compulsion was necessarily spiritual, depending on the power of the Word.[2]

One function of the use of the keys entrusted to the eldership was to protect the Church from anything that would bring disgrace to Christ, her head. Another end of discipline was to prevent the good from being corrupted by constant communication with the bad.[3] It is unfortunate that these negative aspects of church discipline have claimed the chief share of attention, both in practice and subsequent study. Calvin himself warned, "There is a danger, lest instead of discipline we fall into a kind of gehenna, and instead of correctors become executioners."[4] When attention is absorbed by the punitive aspects of church discipline, it is easy to miss what Calvin intended to be its major purpose. The primary object for which the eldership has been furnished with the power of the keys "is not to punish the sinner against his will, but to obtain a profession of penitence by voluntary chastisement."[5] Even excommunication was intended to bring the sinner to salvation by forwarning him of the doom awaiting him if he would not repent.[6] The intention of Reformed

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[1] Ibid., IV.xii.2. [2] Ibid., IV.xi.3.

[3] Ibid., IV.ix.3, xii.2,5.

[4] Ibid., IV.xii.10, (French ed., cited and trans. by Beveridge, p. 459.)

[5] Ibid., IV.xi.3. [6] Ibid., IV.xii.10.

church discipline, in its positive and negative aspects, must be understood to be nothing else but pastoral care.

The Responsibility of the Minister

The practice of the early Church of Scotland differed considerably from the intention of Calvin in the matter of the disciplinary responsibilities of the individual minister. There is no evidence in the early Church of Scotland of private confession and absolution of the type advocated by Calvin. The confessional found no place in the Scottish Reformation. Confession was practised in the Church as part of the process of discipline, but was not especially to be made to the ministry. The situations of the sort which Calvin felt could best be handled by private confession and ministerial absolution were in Scotland usually dealt with as "cases" for counselling, an aspect of pastoral care to be discussed in Chapter V.

Much of the recorded disciplinary efforts of ministers working independently is of a negative character, usually referred to by critics as "scolding." An early illustration of ministerial rebuking as a part of church discipline is an interview between John Knox and Mary, Queen of Scots. When, in 1563, Knox condemned in a sermon Mary's approaching marriage to Darnley, Her Majesty sent for him. Upon his admission, accompanied by Erskine of Dun, to her presence, the Queen began furiously to cry out that no ruler had ever been handled as she had been. She had, she contended, borne with Knox in all his rigorous manner of speaking, offering to him presence and audience whenever it pleased him to admonish her. "And yet," she stormed, "I can-

not be quit of you." When Mary's tears subsided, Knox replied that she had been most kind to him through their controversies. He insisted, though, that when God delivered her from her spiritual darkness, she would understand that there was never anything offensive in what he said. Except for his preaching, Knox said, he rarely offended anyone. But in the pulpit, "I am not master of myself, but maun obey Him who commands me to speak plain, and to flatter no flesh upon the face of the earth." "But what," said the Queen, "have you to do with my marriage?" In reply, Knox said:

> I grant your Grace offered unto me more than ever I required; but my answer was then, as it is now, that God hath not sent me to await upon the courts of Princesses, nor upon the chambers of Ladies; but I am sent to preach the Evangel of Jesus Christ, to such as please to hear it; and it hath two parts, Repentance and Faith. And now, Madam, in preaching repentance, of necessity it is that the sins of men be so noted, that they may know wherein they offend; but so it is, that the most part of your Nobility are so addicted to your affections, that neither God his word, nor yet their Commonwealth, are rightly regarded. And therefore it becomes me so to speak, that they may know their duty.
> .....
> Whensoever that the Nobility of this Realm shall consent that ye be subject to an unfaithful husband, they do as much as in them lieth to renounce Christ, to banish his truth from them, to betray the freedom of this Realm, and perchance in the end do small comfort to your self.

The Queen gave way again to "her inordinate passion." Knox waited, without changing his countenance, for a long time. Finally, he assured the Queen of his sorrow at her tears, but because they stemmed from his statement of the truth, as his calling required, he must allow her tears, rather than hurt his conscience or betray his country through his silence. Although Knox had no hesitation in criticising his ruler either publicly or privately, he uniformly insisted that it was for no purpose

but the good of her own soul and the safety of the nation, which, if great sins were allowed to go unchallenged by the Church, would suffer at the hands of an offended God.[1]

Row related that a few days after the murder of Regent Moray, Patrick Simson, preaching before the king on Genesis 4:9, said to the king, "Sir I assure you in God's name the Lord will ask at you, Where is the Earl of Moray, your Brother?" The king replied, "Mr. Patrick, my chalmer door was never steeked upon you; ye might have ~~have~~ told me anything ye thought in secret." "Sir, the scandal is public," was Simson's rejoinder.[2] Attention must be drawn to the obvious confusion of Row's account. The king at the time of Moray's murder was less than four years old. However, Row's relation of the story does reveal how he felt about the role of the minister in using the pulpit as a place of exercising discipline.

The Church insisted that such ministerial denunciations, assuming good faith, were not the products of the animosities of the minister, but essential to the maintenance of discipline. For example, some of the nobility complained, "Might not sins be reproved in general, albeit that men were not so specially taxed, that all the world might know of whom the preacher spoke?" The answer quoted by Knox was that if men would be ashamed publicly to offend, ~~then~~ then ministers would not need to be specific in their condemnations of sin, "but so long as Protestantis are not ashamed manifestly to do against the evangel of Jesus Christ, so

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[1]Knox, Op. Cit., II, pp. 387ff.

[2]John Row, Historie of the Kirk of Scotland, Edinburgh: Maitland Club, 1842, pp. 144f.

long cannot the Ministers of God cease to cry, that God will be revenged upon such abusers of his holy word.[1] In other words, public ministerial condemnation was understood to be aimed, like other forms of discipline, at giving the preached Word practical force in the life of the Church and its members. This practice should be considered as the power of the keys, negatively exercised.

The value as pastoral care of such ministerial practice cannot be assessed. In time of the Church's ascendency, the threat of public condemnation by the minister, especially in churches where sessions were weak or dominated by the mighty, no doubt helped some to curb their appetites, but it cannot be said that it brought about widespread "repentence and faith," the end for which it was designed.

The second distinctive disciplinary employment of the minister in the Scottish Church, was his role as spokesman for the session in disciplinary matters. The standards of the Church explained that the minister was the "messenger and herald between God and the people."[2] As part of declaring the will of God, that is, the ministry of the Word, the minister was required to pronounce, as directed by the eldership, all disciplinary sentences. About this responsibility of the minister, more will be said in the discussion of the operation of the session.

The Responsibility of the Session

The Session.- The work of the Scottish ~~church~~ kirk session, or "par-

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[1] Op. Cit., II, p. 419.

[2] II BOD, iv.11, 13.

ticular eldership," is closely patterned after the doctrine and practice of the Genevan Church. G. D. Henderson has pointed out that the chief features of the session - the scriptural warrant, the ideal of spiritual independence, the giving of ecclesiastical responsibility to persons other than ministers, sessional control of moral discipline, parochial education, care of the poor, the division of parishes into elder's districts, the particular duties of elders, and even the points to which discipline was to be directed - were taken from the Church of Geneva.[1] The Scottish Reformation began with some sessions already in operation, and soon set forth a detailed system of church government. This system, as used by the seventeenth century Church, made the eldership responsible for good order and administration of discipline, administration of the Word being the responsibility of the minister.[2] Specifically, the session was required to keep its church in good order, to restore - whenever possible - offenders, to see to the pure preaching of the Word, to insure administration of the sacraments, to maintain discipline, to distribute the patrimony, to carry out the decrees of superior church courts, and otherwise to govern its own church and parish.[3] Of these duties, the one most directly related to pastoral care was discipline.

Types of Disciplinary Cases.- The rules for the exercise of discipline were laid down in Chapter viii, Book of Discipline and

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[1] Scottish Ruling Elder, p. 30.

[2] II BOD, ii.7.

[3] Ibid., vii.

in The Order of Excommunication and Public Repentance. These standards recognized two broad classifications of cases with which the session would be concerned.

Crimes punishable by death.- The first category included those crimes for which the civil penalty was usually death: murder, adultery, sorcery, witchcraft, charming, abortion, and open blasphemy.[1] In the event of this type of crime, the session was to proceed directly to a hearing for excommunication of the offender. If, as often happened in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, no trial followed the commission of such a crime, the Church was expected to begin excommunication proceedings promptly. If the accused were acquitted by the civil court, he was not to be excommunicated by the Church, but he might, depending upon the circumstances, be required to give proof publicly of his penitence, as directed by the session. If convicted and sentenced to speedy execution, he could ask the forgiveness of the Church, which, through its minister and elders, should not only give him all possible consolation, but also grant him absolution according to his repentance and faith. When the excommunication of an offender was decided upon, the sentence, in the following form, was to be read by the minister in the presence of the congregation.

> It is clearly known unto us that N, sometime baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and so reputed and counted for a Christian, hath fearfully fallen from the Society of Christ's body by committing of cruel and wilful murder....Therefore, in the Name and authority of the Eternal God and of His

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[1]Clark, Op. Cit., p. 73.

Son Jesus Christ, we pronounce the said N excommunicated, and accursed in that his wicked act.[1]

An offender excommunicated under these provisions could apply for restoration to the fellowship of the Church, since excommunication was to be regarded as a means of regaining a fallen brother. He was to wait forty days from his sentencing, then be assigned "such paines as may try whether he be penitent or not," the least of which being that he was required to stand three separate Sundays beside the Church door, bareheaded and barefooted, making his confession and entreating the people to pray for his readmission. If no further satisfaction is required, he was to be absolved by the minister, according to his repentance. In this provision for the penitent to prove his penitence by overt "pains," Clark sees the warrant for the punishments assigned by sessions in executing the church discipline of the succeeding two centuries.[2] It is more probable that punishments were considered inherent in the system and that no further warrant was sought.

Offenses not Punishable by Civil Law.- The greater share of the disciplinary labor of the session was devoted to that type of case in which the trespass was not punishable by civil law, but which was offensive to the Church. For the more odious of these, fornication, habitual drunkenness, swearing, profanity, chiding, fighting, brawling, contempt of church discipline, Sabbath breaking, and similar offenses, the offender was to be called

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[1]Cited by William McMillan, Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church, London: James Clarke, 1931, p. 334.

[2]Op. Cit., p. 74.

before the session. If his crime was proven, he was rebuked and directed to satisfy the Church publicly. If he refused, he was excommunicated after due process. Less heinous sins, vain words, uncomely gestures, negligence in hearing the Word, absence from the Lord's Table, indications of avarice or pride, ostentation, and so forth, were to be treated by admonition, but not necessarily to require public satisfaction. Refusal to heed offered admonition was itself a more serious crime and required the power of the session for correction.

The disciplinary process leading to absolution or excommunication in this type of case was complex. As soon as the offense was known by anyone, the offender was to be admonished privately by one or two members of the Church. If the offender repented, the matter was dropped. If the offender proved unrepentant, the admonition was to be repeated before two or three witnesses. Repentance brought an end to the process. If, however, the offender did not repent, he was to be called before the session and accused of the original offense plus contempt of the admonition. Assuming that the charges were proven, if the the offender amended his ways, his disciplining went no further. If he did not, the fact of his sin would be declared to the congregation at the first Sunday worship service, without mentioning the name of the sinner, but admonishing the unnamed offender to satisfy in public what he refused to do in private. If the offender then submitted to the discipline of the Church, the session might allow the minister to see privately to the satisfaction of any offended parties and to the repentance of the sinner. If not, the second "public admonition" was to follow at

the next Sunday service. At this time, the sin and the name of the sinner are declared. After this, satisfaction, which heretofore might have been made in private, must be made publicly. Even public satisfaction is to be allowed only upon humble application of the offender and after instruction by the session. If the offender is still unrepentant, the third public warning is given a week after the second. If the process of repentance has not been begun by the Sunday following the third public warning, the minister, by direction of the session, is to pronounce excommunication.

> Here I, in Thy name and at the Commandment of this Thy present congregation, cut off, seclude, and excommunicate from Thy body and from our society, N, as a person slanderous, proud, contemnor, and a member for this present altogether corrupted and pernicious to the body. And this his sin (albeit with sorrow of heart) by virtue of our ministry we bind and pronounce the same bound in heaven and earth.[1]

Restoration of Offenders.- The Order of Public Repentance provided for the restoration of those who repented after the second public warning but before excommunication was pronounced. On the Sunday appointed immediately after the sermon, during which the penitent most probably sat in a special place, the penitent came forward and heard an address by the minister on the significance of public repentance. A prayer was then offered on his behalf. After this, the offender was required to make his confession or, if stricken by remorse, assent to the confession made for him by the minister. If the congregation required no further satisfaction, the minister lectured first the penitent,

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[1]Cited, Ibid., p. 337.

warning him to resist evil in the future, then the congregation, warning them to beware of falling into sin. After a prayer of thanksgiving and an assurance by the penitent that he will abide by the discipline of the Church, the minister was to say:

> If thou unfeignedly repent thy former iniquity and believe in the Lord Jesus, then I in His name pronounce and affirm that thy sins are forgiven, not only in earth, but also in Heaven, according to the promises annexed with the preaching of His Word and to the power put in the Ministry of His Church.[1]

Excommunicates were to be restored by the procedure given by the "Form of Absolution." After the penitent had come before the session and given such satisfaction as they saw fit, the elders were at the Sunday service appointed, to bring to the place in the church reserved for those under discipline, and present him as one seeking reconciliation with the Church. After the minister offered a prayer of thanksgiving, the penitent was to confess his specific sins. After further prayers, the minister pronounced the absolution:

> In the name and authority of Jesus Christ, I, the Minister of His blessed evangel, with consent of the whole Ministry and Church, absolve thee, N from the sentence of excommunication, from the sin by thee committed, and from all censures laid against thee for the same before according to thy repentance, and pronounce thy sin to be loosed in Heaven and thee to be received again to the society of Jesus Christ, to His body the Church, to the participation of His sacraments, and finally to the fruition of all his benefits. In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. So be it.[2]

Disciplinary Sentences.- The language and significance of these

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[1]Cited, Ibid., p. 337. [2]Ibid.

sentences of excommunication and absolution are important keys to the understanding of the theory of pastoral care held by the Scots Reformers. First, they give clear evidence of the Calvinistic origins of Scots thought on discipline. More important, they provide a summary of the major principles involved in the use of discipline as a method of pastoral care. The role and authority of the minister, the responsibility of the session, and the meaning of penance are all implicit in the form of these pronouncements.

In pronouncing these sentences, the authority of Christ Himself is claimed for the minister. This authority is in no way different from the authority claimed for the preached Word or, for that matter, from the authority of the ministerial office as a whole. Calvin once explained that since Christ does not dwell in the Church physically, His office is filled visually by the ministry.[1] Considered in the light of the fundamental Reformed doctrine of the ministry, the claims made here are seen to be ministerial, not priestly. The minister, through his stewardship of the Word, was considered to wield the authority of Christ, truly binding or truly loosing those whose condition was described by the Word. The difference between what is found here and priestly excommunication and absolution is that the responsibility for the exercise of this authority rests not with the minister, as in the case of a priest or bishop, but with the session, which is considered the agent of the Church in matters of discipline. Although the language of these documents might

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[1] Institutes, IV.iii.1f.

lead one to believe that they presupposed a real democracy by requiring the "consent of the whole church," the actual practice was ecclesiastical aristocracy. In these matters, the session, or higher church court, was considered to represent fully the Church.[1]

Disciplinary Practices.- The origin, purpose, and prescribed procedures for the exercise of discipline by the seventeenth century Church of Scotland have been described. How well in practice did the sessions of the period carry out the ideals committed to them?

Criticisms of Kirk Session Discipline.- Kirk session discipline has been often and sharply criticised. The usual faults found are that it was harsh and arbitrary or that it was ineffective. The evidence is that the punishments meted out by kirk sessions in the seventeenth century may be considered unnecessarily harsh only by ignoring the standards of punishment and retribution then recognized by society. During the century, torture was an accepted form of examining witnesses. Nearly two hundred offences, including witchcraft - itself an expression of contemporary superstition and ignorance - were punishable by death. The vindictive brutality of seventeenth century Scottish civil authority is shown nowhere more clearly than in the persecutions of the Covenanters during the reigns of Charles II and James VII. It cannot be argued that the Church was unduly harsh in its attempts to correct the conduct of a society where torture and

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[1] Supra, p. 2

death were commonplaces of legal processes.[1]

How well individual elders understood the theological nature of the discipline they exercised cannot be generalized, although it is certain that many, especially in the landward regions, understood only that they were to take cognizance of the offenses delated to them. There is no doubt, however, but that they had the authority, and felt a responsibility, to oversee the life and morals of the people within their jurisdiction.[2] Their authority was conferred by the Church, enforced by the state, and recognized by all. Where discipline was at its best, the elders worked for the reclaiming of the offenders brought before them. Sometimes, they sought to correct those offences which they felt might otherwise draw down the wrath of an offended God upon the land. An example of this type of protection of the Church by discipline is the action taken by the session of Peebles in 1629 when an offender, for marrying the widow of his grand-uncle was sentenced to lose his head. The offense, they said, was a crime "fit to procure the wrath and displeasure of God to the whole nation."[3] At least, the sessions through the discipline they exercised with varying skill, sought to improve the society in which they found themselves, by correcting the harm done the Church or others by the trangressions of those within their jurisdiction. G. D. Henderson feels that the sys-

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[1]G. D. Henderson, Scottish Ruling Elder, pp. 100ff.

[2]G. D. Henderson, Presbyterianism, Aberdeen: University Press, 1954, pp. 68f.

[3]Robert Chambers, Domestic Annals of Scotland, Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers, 1858, p. 28.

tem was, on the whole, popular with seventeenth century Scots, citing examples of congregations that complained that discipline was not strict enough in their parishes.[1]

Offenses Actually Handled.- The offenses with which church courts commonly concerned themselves in seventeenth century Scotland were sexual offenses, Sabbath breaking, political offenses, witchcraft, behavior in church, blasphemy and bad language, drunkenness, gambling, going on pilgrimages, clandestine marriages, abuse of parents or church officials, and the refusal to submit to discipline.[2] ~~Too,~~ They were also responsible for settling disputes that broke out in the parish. It has been reasonably objected that the very nature of church discipline restricted its attention to external sins and that the more serious offenses of the heart, pride, self-righteousness, bigotry, and hypocrisy, were immune to treatment by the session.[3] While this must be conceded, it is also true that the modern Church has improved little upon the system which, in the seventeenth century, reached all members of society including many whose modern counterparts have their conduct neither challenged nor influenced by the Church.

Temporal Punishments.- More difficult to explain are the temporal punishments which the Church denied itself in theory and used

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[1]G. D. Henderson, Scottish Ruling Elder, pp. 105ff.

[2]Ibid;, pp. 119ff.

[3]William D. Maxwell, History of Worship in the Church of Scotland, Oxford: University Press, 1955, p. 147.

in practice. Fines, banishment, ducking, use of jougs, and other physical punishments were commonly imposed by seventeenth century sessions. One explanation was that civil officials were often elders and sat with the session. Such persons who exercised both temporal and spiritual jurisdiction were usually known as "session baillies."[1] After the session had used "spiritual censures only to bring the party to repentance," the session baillie might impose a fine or other temporal punishment to make repentance even more certain.[2] In other sessions, such distinctions were unknown. The session would, on its own authority, impose the sentence it felt to be most appropriate, little scrupling to exact a fine or to place an offender in the jougs.

Effectiveness of Sessional Discipline.- An accurate assessment of the effectiveness of sessional discipline as pastoral care in seventeenth century Scotland is not possible. Of its three uses, the regaining of offenders, the discouragement of those tempted to similar offenses, and the vindication of the honor of the Church and Christ, its Lord, there is no way to measure, on a sufficiently large scale, the results of the discipline directed to the first two ends. It must be admitted, however, that in seventeenth century Scotland this type of discipline failed in its fundamental purpose of making the Word of God normative in the lives of the members of the Church. The hopes the Reformers

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[1]Robert Baillie, Historical Vindication, cited by G. D. Henderson, Scottish Ruling Elder, p. 111.

[2]Clark, Op. Cit., p. 175.

entertained for discipline as the practical enforcement of the requirements of the Word of God, in conjunction with preaching, were never realized. Records of the century indicate that the effectiveness of discipline varied from person to person. Some offenders took lightly the concern of the session or openly defied it. Others were overcome by terror in the face of discipline. When called before the session, some mended their ways, but others made repeated appearances. After the Revolution, church discipline began to decline in the Church of Scotland and has virtually disappeared.[1]

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[1] Ibid., Chap. viii f.

CHAPTER III

THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF THE WORD

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THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Theory

The theory of Calvin and of the Scottish Church relative to the preaching of the Word as pastoral care have been discussed in Chapter I. Therefore this chapter, after a brief summary of the theory of preaching as pastoral care, will be concerned with the application of this theory in the public ministry of the Word in the seventeenth century Scottish Church.

The Heart of Pastoral Care.- The preaching of the Word was the great emphasis in the Scottish Reformed view of the work of the ministry. Indeed, preaching was more than an emphasis; it was the sine qua non of the ministerial office. The significance of all else the minister might be and do derived from the conviction that to the minister were entrusted the "oracles of God." Through preaching, the Word was mediated to the members of the congregation. Through the mediated Word, the hearer was called and his salvation made effective.

The Nature of Preaching.- In the preaching of the Word, the Holy Spirit through the minister - not the minister himself - offers nothing else than Christ to each of those present. It was, understandably, essential that the Word publicly ministered through the minister in preaching be devoid of the minister's

personal prejudice and that it express no opinion or point of view other than that clearly given in Holy scripture. The preached Word was, necessarily, identical in content with the written Word, but the preached Word was to be more than exposition of Biblical doctrine. According to the Westminster Assembly, it was insufficient for the minister to make clear that portion of the Divine Will expressed in a text or to state its significance in general terms. The minister had to "bring home" the message of his text by application to the individuals who heard him.[1] In other words, through preaching, the minister was to offer the Word in the manner and with the emphasis required to meet the spiritual needs of those who made up his congregation. Specific sins were to be attacked, specific wounds healed, and specific virtues commended. Through the work and person of the minister, the preached Word could be fitted and channeled into the consciousness of his hearers for specific, rather than general, pastoral ends. Although the use of the written Word, for example, in the regular reading of the Bible, was recognized as having usefulness in pastoral care, the chief means by which God applied the Word was always considered to be through the voice of the minister. The difference between the ministering of the Word through the reading of the scriptures and through preaching was likened to the difference between the Old Testament and the ministry of Jesus.[2] God had given His Word to man-

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[1]Westminster "Directory for Public Worship," Subordinate Standards, p. 145.

[2]Westminster Confession of Faith, vii.5f.

kind through the Law and the prophets, but because it was, in the time of Jesus, expressed in general terms, men were able to avoid its application. Jesus did not change the Word but became the Word and applied it through preaching directly to his hearers. This task of Jesus was committed to the minister, whose responsibility was not to alter the Word in the slightest detail, but to make it relevant, using both public and private ministry of the Word to "discharge his conscience." The public ministry of the Word was to be performed chiefly through the public worship services of the Church.

The Form of the Public Worship Service

Design of the Scottish Reformation.- The ministering of the Word was the principal purpose for which services of public worship were to be convened, according to the understanding of the Scottish Reformers. Their design, briefly, was set forth in the Book of Discipline. Sermons were to be preached at a Sunday forenoon service in all churches. In "notable towns," an additional preaching service was to be held on a week-day chosen by the parish. In "great towns," there was to be either sermon or common prayers daily.[1] In churches where, due to the abundance of parishes and scarcity of ministers at the time of the Reformation, ministers could not be obtained immediately, readers were to conduct services of common prayer in lieu of preaching, until a minister could be secured.[2]

The most significant service, of the several scheduled

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[1] ix. [2] iv.

to be conducted through the week, was Sunday forenoon worship, when not only was the Word to be ministered, but, as occasion demanded, the sacraments dispensed and marriage solemnized.[1] A detailed description of the service has been given by William McMillan. A much briefer view will suffice here. The congregation was convened by the ringing of the "first bell." At the "second bell," in parishes having both minister and reader, the reader led the people in prayers and psalms and read, at length, from both the Old and New Testaments. The reader's service lasted approximately an hour and was intended to prepare the hearts of the people for the more reverent reception of the Word to be offered in the sermon following. The second part of the service, "beginning at the third bell," was in the hands of the minister and was, previous to the Westminster Assembly, to proceed according to the Book of Common Order. The parts of the service conducted by the minister included an opening exhortation, confession of sin, a psalm, prayer for assistance, the sermon, a prayer for the Church, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, another psalm, and the blessing.[2] Duncan Anderson's analysis of seventeenth century practice is in agreement with the outline given above, except that no mention is made of the Creed.[3] On the other hand, Edgar argues for a much simpler form. According to his conclusions, drawn also from primary evidence,

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[1] ix.

[2] William McMillan, The Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church, 1550 - 1638, London: James Clarke, 1931, pp. 114ff.

[3] The Bible in Seventeenth-century Scottish Life and Literature, London: Allenson, 1936, p. 85.

the minister's portion of the service consisted of extempore prayers, the giving of the text, the sermon and the blessing.[1] Both Anderson and Edgar have well documented arguments, but may have been too precise in trying to present a typical worship service of the century. Although, as shown by McMillan, many ministers in the period followed the letter of the Book of Common Order, many others employed simpler forms for the services of their parishes.

The Westminster Assembly.- The Westminster Divines rejected the forms of the Book of Common Prayer[3] and prescribed a service of public worship not unlike that practised in Scotland. For the Scots, the major change was that the reader's service, the office of reader having been abolished, was combined with that of the minister. The entire service was to be conducted by the minister and began with a prayer. Reading of the scripture, with the possibility of exposition of the portion read, and a psalm, altogether the equivalent of the former reader's service, followed the opening prayer. Then came a much longer prayer, with eleven headings and a suggested form of more than seventeen hundred words. The last petition of the prayer was that God would make the sermon effective. An introduction to the text, the text itself or a summary of it, and an analysis of the text preceded the sermon. The sermon proper consisted of the expo-

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[1]Andrew Edgar, Old Church Life in Scotland, Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1885, pp. 57f.

[2]Loc. cit.

[3]"Directory of Public Worship," preface, Subordinate Standards, pp. 135f.

sition of the doctrines contained in the text and an exhortation. Prayer (five headings), a psalm, and the blessing brought the service to an end.[1]

The Form of Sermon Recommended by the Westminster Assembly

The Typical Form of a Seventeenth Century Sermon.- The most detailed rules written for the use of seventeenth century Scottish ministers for the organization of the sermon are to be found in the discussion of the preaching of the Word in the Westminster "Directory for Public Worship."[2] Yet, these instructions were considered by their framers not compulsory "for every man, or upon every text; but only recommended, as being found by experience to be very much blessed of God, and very helpful for the people's understandings and memories." The paternal nature of the advice given by the Divines on sermon presentation is remarkable, since the Assembly sought uniformity in religious forms and showed little tendency elsewhere to tolerance. In effect, the Assembly offered a description of the form of sermon construction most popular with non-conformists at mid-century. The description is most important because it summarizes the experience of the first half of the century and sets the pattern for much of the preaching of the second half.

Use of the Text.- As understood by the Westminster Assembly, the sermon really began with an introduction to the text, "brief and perspicuous, drawn from the text itself, or context, or some

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[1] Ibid., pp. 138ff.

[2] Ibid., pp. 144ff.

parallel place, or general sentence of scripture," after which the text itself was given. If the text proved to be lengthy, as in the case of a parable or story, it was recommended that a brief summary be added, so that the contents could be more readily remembered by the congregation. To a short text could be added a paraphrase as an aid to memory, if the minister felt the necessity. The text was to be divided and analysed according to the doctrine it contained. This division of the text according to its matter rather than its grammatical construction is likened by Howard O. Bowman to the practice of many modern preachers of writing down, as an aid to sermon preparation, all the propositions explicitly suggested by the text.[1] The minister was warned by the Assembly against burdening the memory of his hearers by announcing too many divisions of the text, or confusing them by the use of "obscure terms of art" in defining the divisions. ~~Too,~~ The minister was further advised that it was not necessary to preach on all the divisions of the text, but to choose such "as by his residence and conversing with his flock, he findeth most needful and seasonable." Even so, many divisions were a characteristic of seventeenth century sermons. William Guthrie used as many as nineteen.[2] In deciding which of the doctrines contained in his text upon which to expound, the minister was to be governed by three rules: (1) each doctrine was required to be the truth of God, (2) each doctrine must be con-

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[1] "William Guthrie," (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1954), p. 184.

[2] Ibid.

tained in or grounded in the text, and (3) most of his effort was to be exerted upon those doctrines principally intended by the text, or that "make most for the edification of the hearers." Each doctrine to be developed was to be stated in plain terms with only such explanation as was necessary. Parallel places of scripture could be added to each, but these parallels were to be "rather plain and pertinent than many," and their connection with the doctrine to be expounded should be explained.

Exposition of Doctrine.- In developing the doctrines announced, arguments or reasons were to be "solid, and, as much as may be, convincing."[1] Illustrations could be used, and were to be full of light and designed to convey the truth into the hearer's heart with spiritual delight." If, in the development or presentation of the sermon, it became apparent to the minister that the doctrine being presented had come into real or apparent conflict with the scripture, reason, or the prejudice of the hearers, it was essential that the conflict be resolved immediately "by reconciling the seeming differences, in the places of scripture involved, answering the reasons, and discovering and taking away the causes of prejudice and mistake." The last part of this injunction is in itself a considerable goal for any sermon. ~~Too,~~ Pointless arguments were to be avoided since they would tend to cloud rather than to clear the doctrine being held forth.

Application.- Thus far, the sermon was to consist of a text divided into doctrines and the exposition of those doctrines. De-

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[1]G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 192.

pending on the minister and parish concerned, an half hour or hour would have been required. Sometimes the exposition took as long as ninety minutes. The minister then was required to apply the doctrine of his text to his audience. The Westminster Divines thus expressed the need for application:

> He is not to rest in general doctrine, although never so much cleared and confirmed, but to bring it home to special use, by application to his hearers: which albeit prove a work of great difficulty to himself, requiring much prudence, zeal, and meditation, and to the natural and corrupt man will be very unpleasant; yet he is to endeavour to perform it in such a manner, that his auditors may feel the word of God to be quick and powerful, and a discerner of the heart; and that, if any unbeliever or ignorant person be present, he may have the secrets of his heart made manifest, and give glory to God.[1]

By application, the Assembly meant warning against specific sins, instruction in a particular truth, exhortation to duties, refutation of some heresy, and the application of comfort. In other words, there are concrete goals which the minister may expect to achieve by his preaching. In these practical ways, pastoral care is carried out through the public ministry of the Word, according to the views of the Westminster Assembly. Through his sermons, the minister is able to meet the specific pastoral needs of his congregation.

Notes of Trial.- It was recommended that in his sermon the minister include "notes of trial" by which each member of the congregation could be challenged to measure himself. By such self-examination the hearer, under the guidance of an able and experienced minister, could make the most effective use of the sermon.

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[1] pp. 145f.

Specific questions about the relationships between the hearer and the graces, duties, sins, and comforts held forth in the Word being preached would result, they felt, in the congregation's being "excited to duty, humbled for their wants and sins, affected with their danger, and strengthened with comfort," according to their individual conditions. The use of "notes of trial" in the sermon plan offered by the Westminster Assembly may be compared with the placing of a barb on a hook.

Guthrie's "Sermon on Sympathy"[1]

The sermon construction recommended by the Westminster Assembly and detailed above was typical of the public ministry of the Word in the seventeenth century Church of Scotland, both before and after the meeting of the Assembly. As an example of how this type of sermon construction was employed in the pulpit, let us examine a sermon by William Guthrie. "A Sermon on Sympathy" was one of a series of sermons preached by Guthrie in 1662 on Matthew 15:22-28, the story of the Canaanite woman who sought the aid of Jesus for her daughter.

Text.- Matthew 15:23b, "Send her away, for she cryeth after us."

Introduction.- Guthrie began by referring to a previous sermon on the first part of the same verse, in which he explained the significance of Jesus' not answering a word to the woman's pleas. He seems to have summed up the former sermon in a single sentence: "Our Lord Jesus will sometimes give cold entertainment to

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[1]Robert Wodrow, Select Biographies (2 vols.; Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1845, II, pp. 69ff.

the importunate desires of his people, even when he intends to give them a gracious answer at length." Then, he discussed in detail the context and moralized briefly on the conduct of the apostles.

The Doctrine of the Sermon.- "The people of God are many times but cold and weak sympathizers with others in trouble, when the trouble is not at their own door," is the doctrine to be held forth in the sermon. Note that only one doctrine was given. Guthrie then explained that in developing his doctrine, he will deal with three chief problems: (1) what true and kindly sympathy is, (2) the grounds or reasons that oblige us to this duty of sympathy, and (3) the grounds or reasons why many times the people of God offer so little sympathy to others. "Other things more inconsiderable," he hinted, "contained in the doctrine may be brought out in the use."

Development of the Doctrine.- After stating and explaining the doctrine to be presented, Guthrie began his exposition of the text. Here, in outline form, is shown how Guthrie developed the doctrine in this sermon.

I. The nature of true and kindly sympathy.
   A. Sympathy defined as "consuffering."
   B. Examples from scripture of qualities included in sympathy.
      1. Constant remembering of the troubles of others.
         a.) Sympathy of the Babylonian exiles for Jerusalem, Psalm 137:5.
         B.) The instructions of Paul to "remember them that are in bonds as bound with them," Heb. 13:3.
         c.) The practice of our Lord Jesus, Isa. 49:15.
      2. Impossibility of contentment and enjoyment.
         a.) Babylonian exiles kept from music by sympathy, Psalm 137:5.
         b.) Israelites accused of playing when grief was required, Amos 6:3-6.

3. A feeling of personal pain.
   a.) Absence of this pain condemned, Amos 6:6.
   b.) Personal pain in sympathy commanded, Heb. 13:3.
   c.) Best example found in Jesus, Isa. 63:9.
4. Serious prayer to God.
   a.) A prayer for the afflicted, Psalm 102.
   b.) Christ identified as "the man among the myrtle trees," calling to God for mercy on Jerusalem, Zech. 1:12.
5. Willingness to act, as well as to pray, for aid of others.
   a.) Readiness to do anything lawful, Song 8:8.
   b.) Necessity of risking life, Esther 4:16.
6. Sadness of countenance, Neh. 1:4, 2:2.

C. Application of the foregoing.
1. How to determine cases where sympathy is required.
   a.) Those whose suffering requires no sympathy.
      (1) Devils.
      (2) Desperate enemies of God, Psalm 58:10.
   b.) Cases of people in trouble requiring sympathy.
      (1) Those perishing for want of the knowledge of God.
         (a) Paul's sympathy for the Jews, Rom. 9:2.
         (b) Jesus' compassion for those who "fainted as sheep without a shepherd," Matt. 9:39,37.
      (2) Personal suffering of God's people, "either in soul exercise, or outward and bodily trouble on their persons, name, goods, or interests," Job 2:11.
      (3) The sufferings of the Church of God, "the great case."
2. Degree of sympathy required determined by type or combination of types of case.
3. Necessity of choosing proper time for expression of sympathy.

II. The bonds that oblige and tie us to sympathy.
A. The command of God, Rom. 12:15, Heb. 13:3.
B. Imitation of God's sympathy, Isa. 63:9, Judges 10:16.
C. The communion of the saints.
D. Our own expectation of help when needed.

III. Causes of failure to sympathize.
A. Self-love, Matt. 15:23b, Mark 9:5.
B. Little love for Christ.
C. Forgetting what one has been and may be.
D. Permission of God.

"Uses" of the Doctrine.- Guthrie moved directly from his exposition to his exhortation, offering to the congregation four special uses they should make of the doctrine contained in the text. First, now is the true season and time for sympathy. All three

conditions which demand sympathy are found in the present condition of the Church, he said. The world is likely "to be drowned in the ignorance of God," both in nations with Churches and in heathen lands where the Gospel is unknown. The saints are being subjected to great personal suffering. The Church is being trampled and trod upon. Those who fail to show sympathy at this time may expect to suffer three consequences: (1) their lack of sympathy is ample evidence that they are not true members of the Church, (2) they are marked for a stroke from God, and (3) when they come into their own difficulty, no sympathy will be extended to them.

Guthrie's second use was expressed in "notes of trial" by which members of the congregation could judge their own performance of the duties demanded by the sermon. Do you mind the sufferings of God's people as if they were your own? How do you use your liberties and enjoyments? Are you in real pain from the suffering of others? To these questions Guthrie added that there was no need to pose notes of trial about their prayer life and stated that their willingness to act on behalf of others was obviously feeble. If you say that you "will be content to ware your person and estate in the cause; ye lie," he accused them. Guthrie then pointed out, in the third use, that there is very little sympathy among God's people. In use four, with six subdivisions, Guthrie explained the sinfulness of this lack of sympathy.

Conclusion.- The conclusion of the sermon, quoted below, shows a skilful combining of the exposition and exhortation.

> It was a sore trial to this poor woman, and a special piece of discouragement she met with when the disciples bade send her away....And so it must be to others of his people in trouble to know that others in ease lay it not to heart. Therefore, let the consideration of all these things put you to study more the duty of sympathy with the work and people of God, as ye would have ground to expect others to sympathize and bear burden with you in your troubles.[1]

Structurally, the sermon consists of the text and introduction, the statement and explanation of the doctrine, the development of the doctrine, its "uses" or close application, and the conclusion, precisely as recommended by the Westminster Assembly. In this sermon may be seen, too, how the exposition and exhortation were related and the relationship of the whole sermon to the "ordinary," or course of sermons being preaching on a rather long passage of scripture. The exposition or development of the doctrine seems quite complex. There are three major divisions, each with at least three sub-divisions. One of these sub-divisions is divided again into three parts. In spite of its complexity, the flow of thought in the sermon can be seen to be quite smooth. It seems not improbable that the claims made for this type of sermon in a society with few other popular literary opportunities may be well founded in the acceptance given this type of sermon by the populace.

The "New School of Preachers"

Difference in Style from Usual Sermon of the Century.- Another type of sermon construction used in seventeenth century Scotland was that introduced by Robert Leighton and called the new

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[1] Ibid., pp. 79f.

preaching or the new school of preachers. The greatest difference between conventional style and the new style was in the matter of construction. Robert Baillie described the preaching of Andrew Gray, of the new school, as follows:

> He has the new guise of preaching which Mr. Hugh Binning and Mr. Robert Leighton began, contemning the ordinary way of exponing and dividing a text, of raising doctrines and uses; but runs out in a discourse on some common head, in a high romancing, unscriptural style, tickling the ear for the present, and moving the affections in some, but leaving, as he confesses, little or nought to the memory and understanding.[1]

Baillie's criticism is probably as unjust as it is harsh. In a sermon prepared according to the pattern identified with the new school, the minister divided the text into two or three heads, presented exposition and application together on each head, and added a conclusion.

Leighton's Sermon, "The Love of God to Sinners."[2]- As an example of this type of sermon construction, let us examine a sermon of Robert Leighton.

Text.- John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Introduction.- Leighton began the sermon with a brief exegesis. Man fell and deserves damnation, but God has satisfied justice and saved man with the Cross. The sum of the Gospel, he conten-

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[1]The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, ed. David Laing (3 vols.; Edinburgh: Robert Ogle, 1841, III, p. 258.

[2]The Whole Works of the Most Reverend Father in God Robert Leighton, ed. William West (7 vols.; London: Longmans, Green, 1875, VII, pp. 111 ff.

ded, is clearly represented in the text, in which he sees four heads of doctrine: (1) the love of God, the "ground and rise" of everything, (2) the effect of His love, (3) the terms or condition He requires of us, and (4) the reward He promises to all who fulfill the terms.

Exposition of the Doctrine.- Leighton developed the heads of his doctrine as follows:

I. The love of God, considering the party beloving and the party beloved.
   A. God's love for us an abasement of Himself
   B. Nothing in us for God to love.
II. The impossibility of God's expressing His love except in His Son.
   A. Proof that God seeks our salvation.
   B. Our love for God required.
III. The requirements for love of God.
   A. Assent to the Gospel.
   B. Embracing of our Lord Jesus as our Saviour.
   C. Submission to all his precepts.
IV. God's invitation to us, in spite of our sins, to be saved.
   A. Believers rewarded with immediate delivery from danger.
   B. The great reward, eternal life.

Conclusion.- In the conclusion, Leighton reveals much about himself and his preaching. In contrast with Guthrie who emphasised the value of the present life as the field upon which the battle for salvation is fought, Leighton depreciates the value of mortal existence:

> Ye that believe need not be afraid of anything that can befall you here; it's no matter if you get your souls for a prey. Death itself need not seem formidable; nay, on the contrary, desirable, as being the entry to this Blessed Life.[1]

Compared with the form recommended by the Westminster Assembly the simplicity of structure of the new preaching is apparent.

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[1] Ibid. p. 118.

Other Characteristics of Sermon Method

Sermon Presentation.- It has been the practice of many writers to identify preaching styles with the parties into which the Scottish Church was divided during the seventeenth century. In the century itself, Robert Baillie, a Resolutioner, wrote as if the Protesters were all of one style.[1] Gilbert Burnet criticised the preaching style of the Protesters, calling them grave and solemn men with eager spirits and sour dispositions. Their preaching was servile, censorious, haughty, and superstitious. They sought popularity by capitalizing on the distresses of the times and the sins of the rulers.[2] Burnet's observations are unrealistic, since he seeks to assign to one party in the Church many of the abuses of the public ministry of the Word repudiated by the Protesters themselves or attributed by them to other parties. Among later writers, Alexander Smellie describes the style of the Resolutioners as methodical, systematic, cold and stately, in contrast with the evangelistic and enthusiastic presentation of the Protesters.[3] Primary evidence reveals that similarities and variations in sermon style are more to be found in individuals than in parties. In spite of the differences between individual ministers, sermon presentation throughout the century displays a good deal of uniformity, especially in the matters of length, method of choosing the text, delivery, and language.[4]

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[1] Op. cit., iii, pp. 244f. et al.

[2] Thomas Salmon, An Impartial Examination of Bishop Burnet's History of his Own Times (2 vols. London: Chas. Rivington and John Clarke, 1724, I, pp. 334ff.

[3] Men of the Covenant, London: Andrew Melrose, 1903, p. 25.

[4] G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 192.

Length.- By modern standards, seventeenth century Scottish sermons were long. There is every indication that sermons were expected to last at least an hour.[1] Some ministers were even longer. The classical example of a lengthy seventeenth century sermon is the one preached by John Livingstone at a communion at Shotts in 1630. After preaching for ninety minutes, he suddenly received a new inspiration and continued for an additional hour. Evidence of boredom at this sermon was not included in the accounts of the service at which it is reported that many of the hearers experienced a great spiritual uplift.[2] Although ministers were sometimes warned not to exceed their allotted hour,[3] they were fully expected to preach an hour.[4] G. D. Henderson has given an example of what happened on an occasion when a minister's sermon ended before the expiration of the hour. Searching for something about which to preach, he settled on the proposed prayer book with more vigor than reason, to his own embarrassment.[5] In general, it may be said that the average sermon of seventeenth century Scotland was expected to be of an hour's duration.

Choice of Text.- Except for sermons delivered on special occasions, sermon texts were usually taken in sequence from an "ordinary." For his regular course of sermons in his own church, the minister chose a book or chapter of scripture, through which

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[1]Edgar, op. cit., pp. 103ff.

[2]John Howie, The Scots Worthies, ed. J. A. Wylie, London: William MacKenzie, n.d., p. 432.

[3]Edgar, op. cit., p. 105 [4]Henderson, loc. cit., pp. 193f.

[5]Ibid., p. 194.

he advanced text by text until the whole was traversed.[1] The Book of Discipline recommended this practice, arguing that "skipping and divagation from place to place of the Scripture, be it in reading, or be it in preaching," is not as profitable fornthe edification of the Church as the continual following of one text.[2] Since the texts of most of William Guthrie's sermons have been recorded, his work gives an excellent example of how ministers used their "ordinary." Guthrie usually preached two sermons each Sunday, one from the Old Testament, one from the New. From 1648 to the end of the Commonwealth, he used Isaiah 40-49 for the texts for one of the two series of Sunday sermons, for the other, Matthew 7-16. Five and a half months were spent in preaching through the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, while he dwelt on Isaiah 55:4 for about eight months.[3]

For sermons at special occasions, such as communions or fast days, an appropriate text was selected by the minister. For Guthrie's occasional preaching, his favorite sources for texts seem to have been the epistles and Psalms.[4]

Delivery.- Sermons were not read, but were memorized, extemporized, or "expanded" from notes taken into the pulpit.[5] The MS sermon notes of William Guthrie and Robert Leighton are of this last sort. It is reported that in his early ministry, John Livingstone wrote all his sermons before preaching them. One day,

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[1]G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 195

[2]Knox, op. cit., II, pp. 240f.

[3]Bowman, op. cit., p. 182.

[4]Ibid.

[5]G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 197.

invited to preach at the communion of Quodquhan, he intended to use an old sermon, but saw several in the congregation who had heard the sermon before. He chose a new text and took into the pulpit only "some notes of the heads he was to deliver." As he preached, he found "more assistance in enlarging upon these points, and more motion in his own heart" than ever before. Thereafter, it is reported, he did not write out his sermons, but took only a few notes to assist his memory.[1] A similar experience befell James Hutcheson. As he closed his prayer before the sermon a new text came to him. "He preached with great freedom all day, and fourteen or twenty date their conversion from that sermon."[2] It was said of Robert Blair that he quickly prepared brief sermons, then spent much time in prayer, depending on the inspiration of the Spirit to fill out his message.[3] The notes or outlines taken into the pulpit were filled out in the delivery of the sermon with arguments and illustrations. As Bowman points out, for this reason most of Guthrie's illustrations are unrecorded.[4]

Sermons were delivered according to the classical rules and medieval traditions of oratory.[5] Sermons were designed to bring forth an emotional response to the text, and the delivery often included display of emotion. It is said of William Guth-

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[1] Scots Worthies, pp. 431f.

[2] Robert Wodrow, Analecta, (4 vols.; Edinburgh: Maitland Club, 1841, I, p. 131.

[3] Ibid., I, p. 70. [4] Bowman, op. cit., p. 188.

[5] G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 192.

rie that he sometimes wept while preaching[1] and that his emotion often moved the hearts of his congregation.[2] Apparently, some preachers of the seventeenth century felt that the emotions of the minister could be best expressed and the emotions of the congregation best aroused by deliberately induced sighing during delivery of the sermon. In 1654, Robert Baillie said about one of the Protesters that in his preaching, he had "a strange kind of sighing, the like whereof I had never heard as a pythonising out of the bellie of a second person."[3] John Livingstone, referring to the same practice, advised ministers to avoid in their delivery speaking in a singing tone, affectation of a weeping like voice, and frequent interruption of the discourse with sighing.[4]

Sermons were delivered with authority. A characteristic of Scots sermons of the seventeenth century was the directness with which the Word was applied from the pulpit. The minister was assumed to be no less than spokesman for Christ Himself and was to fear no man. For example, in 1594, John Rosse made references to James VI in a sermon preached before the Synod of Perth. The King was angered and sought redress from the Church. The General Assembly examined the sermon, found it sound and unprejudiced. In speaking frankly, the Assembly said, the minister may not have been judicious, but he was "thirsting and

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[1] Analecta, II, p. 148.

[2] "A Letter from One of Mr Guthrie's Relations, to the Publisher containing some Account of His Life," NLS, Wodrow MSS, xlix.18, p. 17.

[3] Cited by Edgar, op. cit, p. 103.

[4] Ibid.

seeking always his Majesty's honor and weal in God."[1] Lesser persons fared no better. In 1630, the Countess of Derby reported that sermons in Kirkcudbright were "horrible, having nothing of devotion in them...but being full of sedition, warning people by their names," and omitting the expected respect and reverence due the station of those in the congregation.[2] Even William Guthrie, noted for his sympathy and understanding, spoke to his own congregation in these words:

> I tell you aye this fault but ye are never like to mend it, ill mannered louns that ye are, And Lairds and Ladies ye come becking and beenging to this place, as who had manners but ye, yet ye have no manners before the Lord.... Ha, knaves that ye are, sweld headed knaves, fat-lugged louns that ye are...ye will get the vengence of God some day for it.[3]

Language.- The Westminster Assembly gave the following instructions concerning the choice of language for sermons:

> [The Word must be ministered] plainly that the meanest may understand; delivering the truth not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect; abstaining also from an unprofitable use of unknown tongues, strange phrases, and cadences of sounds and words; sparingly citing sentences of ecclesiastical or other human writers, ancient or modern, be they never so eloquent.[4]

Although these directions reflected the best tradition of preaching in the seventeenth century, language is an especially personal element of the public ministry of the Word. Individual ministers varied greatly in their choice of sermon language.

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[1]BUKS, p. 409. [2]Cited, Edgar, op. cit., p. 102.

[3]Bowman, op. cit., p. 178.

[4]"Directory for Public Worship," p. 147.

Most ministers tried to suit their language to the capacities of their congregations. G. D. Henderson has given several examples of ministers noted for their ability to be understood by their hearers.[1]

The sermons of William Guthrie present an outstanding example of the language of the seventeenth century Scots pulpit. To a framework of simple English, Guthrie added lowland Scots, enabling himself to be understood by all.[2] Bowman gives an example of Guthrie's choice of words in the way Guthrie urged his hearers to endure temporal pain so that they could enjoy eternal delight. "Though we bouk little of earth," Guthrie said, "we are bouksome in heaven."[3] In expressing disapproval of artistically prepared prayers, he said:

> It is a token of little heart work when folks keeps a flat form in their prayers, and gets leisure to dice them and square them at both ends, and hings them up word by word, as if they were hung upon charnell-pins .... Many of your prayers are over-well dressed. If there were a good hunger at your heart and the spirit of God ticking about your heart-pipe, ye would never take leisure to dice all your expressions so well: I should warrant them come out thick and threefold....[4]

This passage shows not only Guthrie's choice of words, but also exhibits the picturesque and engaging manner of his speech. Few quotations occur in Guthrie's sermons. Master of the Biblical languages, Guthrie introduced shades of meaning from the original without burdening his hearers with strange tongues.[5]

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[1]G. D. Henderson, op. cit., p. 203.

[2]Wodrow, MS "Life of Guthrie," p. 17.

[3]MS "Sermon Notebooks," (9 vols.; New College, Edinburgh and Glasgow Univ. Libraries, I, p. 3. All references to these notebooks are according to Bowman.

[4]Ibid., III, p. 32.

[5]Bowman, op. cit., p. 181.

Sermon Content

Interference by the Church.- The seventeenth century Scottish Church has been criticised for dictating the message to be preached by individual ministers. It has been argued that at mid-century the themes of preaching were virtually prescribed by the General Assemby, which had directed ministers in 1598 and again in 1638 "to preach faithfully against the public sins and corruptions of the time, and particularly against the sins and scandals in that congregation where he lives."[1] In 1648, the directions were more specific, ministers being required to channel the "main current of Applications in Sermons" against the Sectarian and Erastian heresies, contempt of the Word, the Engagement, the machinations of the Malignants, and all Prophaneness."[2] Synods and presbyteries were to enforce these provisions and deposition was threatened for those who did not comply. Bowman concludes that these enactments determined the character of preaching until after the fall of Montrose. In support of his theory, he cites Robert Law:

> From the year 1652 to the year 1660 there was great good done by the preaching of the gospel in the west of Scotland, more than was observed to have been for 20 or 30 years before; a great many brought in to Jesus Christ by a saving work of conversion, which was occasioned by ministers preaching all that time nothing but the gospel, and had left off to preach up parliaments, armies, leagues, resolutions, and remonstrances, which was much in use before, from the year 1638 till that time 52.[3]

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[1]Bowman, op. cit., p. 162.

[2]Alexander Peterkin, Records of the Kirk of Scotland (2 vols.; Edinburgh: John Sutherland, 1838, cited, ibid.

[3]Memorialls, ed. C. K. Sharp, Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1818, p. 7.

Actually, the purpose of the General Assembly was not so much to limit the preacher in what he could deliver as the Word of God, but to point out the most widespread sins and dangers of the time and insist that these should not be overlooked by any minister. Theoretically, the matters to which the attention of the ministers was directed were considered by the Assembly grevious sins, the marks of unregenerate men and communities, the existence of which threatened not only the Church and the nation, but the salvation of all those involved. More practically, the Assembly sought spiritual support for those things upon ~~which~~ the success of which, they felt, depended the very existence of the visible Church. Through the public ministry of the Word, which could not, by definition, be abstract or in general terms, the Church expected specific sins to be overcome, as well as specific wounds healed, and specific virtues commended.[1] It is not surprising, therefore, that the General Assembly instructed ministers to attack from the pulpit "the evils that prevail at home" and the "sins and corruptions of the times, and particularly the sins and scandals in the congregation where he lives."

Sermon Topics.- In the sermon, the minister was to apply the Word of God to the needs of the congregation. According to the Westminster Assembly, the preached Word would meet the needs of the auditors by instruction in some Christian duty, confutation of a false doctrine, exhortation to duty, dehortation and public admonition, or comfort in time of distress.[2] It was not neces-

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[1]"Directory for Public Worship," p. 145. [2]Ibid., p. 146.

sary that a sermon be confined to a single type of application. Most sermons employed more than one, and it was possible for a single sermon to utilize all of the above means of application. It must be emphasised that these types of sermon subject matter were means only, not ends. The preaching of the Word was to be, invariably, "the power of God unto salvation."[1] It would be improper, therefore, to say that the purpose of a sermon of the seventeenth century Scottish Church was, for example, to instruct in the faith or to refute a heresy. The purpose or end of any proper sermon was the salvation or effectual calling of the hearers and the bringing up or dealing with any topic in the sermon was justifiable only as it helped to bring about the salvation of the hearers.

The minister's understanding of the needs of his congregation and the subjects with which he dealt in his sermons were necessarily related to the level of religious knowledge of the congregation, the historical context in which the sermon was delivered, and the diverse situations in which the individual auditors found themselves.

The Content of William Guthrie's Sermons.- How a minister might seek to relate his preaching to the needs of his people is displayed in the pulpit work of William Guthrie. In all his sermons Guthrie sought the weal of the souls of his hearers. He understood his public ministry of the Word to be the only true means of pastoral care.[2] His well-known work as a pastor in the

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[1] Ibid., p. 144.

[2] MS "Sermons Preached by William Guthrie," Aberdeen Univ.

fields and by the streams, was to him a means of leading the indifferent to the public worship of the Church, where in the ministry of the Word the salvation of the Lord could be truly offered. His pulpit ministry was a practical expression of the principles of Calvin and the Westminster Assembly. Through his sermons, he called his flock to renounce their dependence upon themselves or other human agencies, to rely upon Christ Jesus, and to exhibit in themselves the fruits of their repentance and calling. The framework in which Guthrie placed his message varied from sermon to sermon, according to the changing needs of his hearers, but the urgency of "closing with Christ" was always emphasised.

Guthrie's public ministry has been divided into three periods, each with a different emphasis. The first period began in 1644 with Guthrie's induction at Fenwick and continued through the remaining years of the reign of Charles I. During this period, Guthrie was faced with the necessity of establishing a parish in a region long neglected by the Church and marked, it has been reported, by irreverence and ignorance. The second period coincided with the inter-regnum, during which Guthrie sought to build up the spiritual life of his parish and engaged in a "true teaching ministry." The third period lasted from the Restoration to Guthrie's expulsion from his parish in 1664, a period in which Guthrie was fighting for the survival of the visible Church.[1]

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[1]Bowman, op. cit., pp. 207f.

The First Period.- In the first period, following his induction to Fenwick parish, the need to provide adequate religious knowledge for his parishioners seems to have been Guthrie's main concern. He preached on the love and will of God,[1] His Kingdom, the officers of the Kingdom, and its spiritual independence of other kingdoms.[2] He taught in his sermons about the Church visible[3] and its ministry,[4] the significance and importance of worship,[5] and the dangers of Malignancy and Independency.[6] National and popular sins were cited and the hearers urged to renounce and avoid them.[7] Self-examination was held out as a means of understanding and conquering sin.[8] For those who required comfort, Guthrie offered in his sermons new strength for the inner spirit.[9]

The Second Period.- During the inter-regnum, Guthrie's sermons covered the field of Christian doctrine. The persons of the Trinity, the offices and work of each,[10] the divine nature and administration of the Church,[11] the scriptures,[12] and the sacra-

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[1]MS "Sermon Notebooks," I, pp. 311ff.

[2]Ibid., I, pp. 322, 325. [3]Ibid., I, p. 6.

[4]Ibid., I, pp. 3ff, VII, pp. 209, 252.

[5]Ibid., I, p. 320. [6]Ibid., VIII, p. 304.

[7]Ibid., VIII, passim. [8]Ibid., VIII, p. 171.

[9]Ibid., VIII, passim.

[10]Ibid., III, pp. 309ff., V, passim, VII, pp. 154ff, 276.

[11]Ibid., I, pp. 1 et al., II, pp. 721ff, III, pp. 2, 37f, 44, 309ff., et al., V, p. 161, VII, pp. 22ff., 72ff.

[12]Ibid, I, p. 1 et al.

raments,[1] were illuminated by Guthrie's sermons in this period. Also discussed were the problem of evil,[2] the doctrine of man,[3] and God's plan of salvation for man.[4] The many aspects of the Christian life received considerable attention.[5] He did not overlook the historical events of the period, but took the defeat at Dunbar as an occasion to remind his people that their confidence should be placed in the Lord instead of men.[6] At the landing of Charles II in 1650, he warned the people that their sins had procured their troubles and that they should repent and have confidence innGod's final triumph.[7]

The Third Period.- After the Restoration, Guthrie considered the greatest danger to the spiritual welfare of his congregation the temptation to leave the Church, now beginning to suffer, for the advantages to be had under the ecclesiastical system promulgated by Charles II. It never occured to Guthrie that the Church could take any visible form except Presbytery. The Presbyterian system was the only Church, he argued, commanded by God in the scriptures. Episcopacy, with its "anti-Christian titles," Independency, and other forms of ecclesiastical structure were not for him variations in the government of the Church, but flat disobedience of God's Word. He equated loyalty to Christ with

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[1] Ibid., VII, pp. 67f.

[2] Ibid., II, pp. 732ff. [3] Ibid., VII, pp. 141ff.

[4] Ibid., III, pp. 536f., V, p. 235, VII, pp. 2, 7, 10f., 38, 272, 274, passim.

[5] Bowman, op. cit., p. 214.

[6] MS "Sermon Notebooks," VIII, pp. 261ff. [7] Ibid.

loyalty to the Presbyterian system of church-government. The Covenant was not seen as a dramatic expression of faith, but as a binding contract with God, the breaking of which could result only in the wrath of an injured God. In the sermons of this period, three great concepts stand out.

First, there was the conviction that the disasters of the time had been brought about by the sins of the people and their leaders.[1] Indeed, the sufferings of the time were something of a blessing in that they focused attention on the sins of the people and the need for the reformation of their lives. If anyone in the congregation could not understand why God was venting His wrath upon Scotland, he was to examine himself. Guthrie placed the responsibility for the troubles of the period not upon the national leaders, who would be removed immediately they did not serve God's purpose, but upon the individual, who had first brought about God's displeasure by his sin, then had left God to follow the national leaders. Guthrie's emphasis on individual holy life as the remedy for the national ills is reminiscent of the message of Robert Leighton.

Secondly, Guthrie called upon his hearers to choose in matters of religion between God and the king, eternal delight and damnation.[2] To Guthrie, the government was resisting the will of God. The people were warned not to sell their souls for temporal benefits nor to fear death should it prove the price of their salvation. Guthrie's sermon on "Letters of Horning," in which he pronounced the excommunication of those who opposed Presbytery, sums up his message relative to the need for preserv-

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[1]Bowman, op. cit., pp. 228, 253f. [2]Ibid., pp. 234, 250ff.

ing the Church. The text was Matthew 16:26, "What will a man give in exchange for his soul?" In the sermon, Guthrie called upon his hearers to choose between Christ and the world's gear. Guthrie did not distinguish between Christ, the Church in Presbyterian form, and the Covenant. Loyalty to one was loyalty to all. It was impossible, in his thought, to reject one and adhere to another. Those who renounced the Covenant or acceded to Episcopacy to avoid confiscation of their property or even death at the hands of the civil government, abandoned Christ and chose the King. Those who repudiated God by such choice were excommunicated. In the declaration of excommunication, Guthrie invoked the "word of God, and acts and laws of the truth standing in force...unrepealed" and called as witnesses heaven and earth, the imprisoned, the banished, and the heads and hands, bleaching on spikes across the country, of those executed for their loyalty to Christ. As the ambassador of Christ and in His name and authority, Guthrie disclaimed and excommunicated all who sold "Christ and his Cause and their conscience for this world's gear" or who had taken offices in the Episcopal organization. In conclusion, Guthrie appealed to any who were guilty of the slightest compliance, that is, disloyalty to Christ, to withdraw immediately and to place their trust solely in Christ.

The third emphasis in Guthrie's preaching after the Restoration was his insistance that his hearers should not worry about the happenings that threatened to ruin the Church and those who remained true to the Church.[1] It was necessary that they suffer,

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[1] Ibid., pp. 255f.

but they should remember, while waiting for deliverance, that in all their sufferings Christ was made to suffer. The rescue of the Church and the elect from all their difficulties is certain, but Christ delays his coming in order to accomplish his purpose in history. The chastening they are experiencing is a sign of Christ's love and His desire to purify them. In his last sermon, Guthrie sought to reaffirm the certainty of the relief of the Church, in good time, by her Lord. His text was Hosea 13:9, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help." Having delivered two sermons from the first half of the verse, he preached on "But in me is thy help." The Church would be preserved, as it had always been, through the survival of a remnant. It was sure that God and the Covenanted Church could not part. Although the acts of the rulers and the prelatical party were directly against God, seeking to make void His Law, the work of God could never fail. Although faithful and godly ministers had been suppressed, the Church would be reestablished by God who would call forth new ministers and throw out the "insolent party."

Outstanding Preachers

Although, as described above, the sermons of seventeenth century Scotland displayed considerable uniformity, preaching technique is unavoidably personal. It is necessary, therefore, to describe briefly the public ministry of the Word of a few of the outstanding preachers in seventeenth century Scotland.

Robert Bruce (1554-1631).- The ministry of Robert Bruce is especially important, not only because he has been considered the outstanding preacher of the first third of the seventeenth century in Scotland,[1] but because he represents a connection between the sixteenth century Church of Knox and Melville and the Church of the Covenant. Bruce studied and served with Andrew Melville.[2] Alexander Henderson is reported to have been converted to the Presbyterian cause by a sermon of Bruce.[3] David Dickson, Robert Blair, John Livingstone, and others were his disciples.[4] As described by W. M. Campbell, Bruce took the torch from Knox and Melville, lit countless churches in Scotland, then placed it in the hands of Alexander Henderson.[5]

After studying law in France and divinity at St. Andrews, Bruce began his ministry at St. Giles, Edinburgh in 1587.[6] As a minister there, Bruce was a great light shining through southeastern Scotland. "The power and efficacious energy of the Spirit accompanied the word preached by him in a most sensible manner," to the terror of those yet uncalled from their sins. The authority of God was so apparent in his preaching that he earned the fear and respect of the greatest in the land.[7] The king placed considerable confidence in Bruce, although Bruce hesitat-

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[1]John Macleod, Scottish Theology, Edinburgh: Free Church of Scotland, 1943, p. 55.

[2]Scots Worthies, pp. 174f. [3]Ibid., pp. 216f.

[4]Ibid., p. 184; Cf. William M. Campbell, The Triumph of Presbyterianism, Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1959, p. 11.

[5]Op. cit., p. 12. [6]Fasti, I, p. 52.

[7]Scots Worthies, p. 176.

ed neither to preach against his ecclesiastical policies[1] nor to scold him from the pulpit for chattering during sermon.[2] Bruce was removed from the St. Giles pulpit not so much for what he preached as what he would not preach. The king insisted that the ministers publicly praise God for his preservation from the Gowrie conspirators. Bruce refused, feeling that the evidence offered by the king was inadequate to be delivered as the Word of God and was exiled to France, then to Inverness in 1605.[3]

Bruce's Edinburgh labors were eclipsed by his ministry in exile. Not only did he preach at Inverness, but itinerated over central Scotland. Wherever he preached, he drew large crowds, especially from the untended highlands.[4] The influence of Bruce's sermons in exile, is, according to Fasti, "almost without parallel in the history of the Scottish Church."[5] John Macleod asserts that the influence of Bruce's preaching in exile may even now be traced.[6] His house and field preaching and team ministry at communion services set a precedent followed by other ministers later in the century.[7]

Bruce's sermons have been described as clear, lucid, evangelical, instructive, and full of good Scots idiom,[8] dis-

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[1]Scots Worthies, pp. 177f. [2]Campbell, op. cit., p. 11.

[3]David Calderwood, History of the Kirk of Scotland, ed. T. Thomson (8 vols.; Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1842, VI, p. 95.

[4]Fasti, I, p. 55; D. C. MacNicol, Master Robert Bruce, Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier, 1907, pp. 231f.

[5]I, p. 55. [6]Op. cit., p. 56.

[7]Campbell, Op. cit., p. 11. [8]Ibid., p. 12.

playing in their construction exegetical acumen, strength of argument, sublimity of thought, and the power of Bruce's understanding.[1] Howie gives this testimony to Bruce's effectiveness as a preacher:

> There was none in his time who preached with such evidence of the power of the Spirit, and no man had more seals of his ministry; yea, many of his hearers thought that no man, since the days of the Apostles, ever spoke with such power. And although he was no Boanerges, being of a slow but great delivery, yet he spoke with such authority and weight as became the oracles of God; so that some of the most stouthearted of his hearers were ordinarily made to tremble, and by having the door, which had formerly been shut against Jesus Christ, as by an irresistable power broken open, and the secrets of their hearts made manifest, they oftentimes went away under deep conviction.[2]

The content of the recorded sermons of Bruce is strikingly pastoral in that the sermons are directed to the resolution of the problems confronting his hearers. Bruce's advice to his hearers is that their problems may be solved by renouncing their own strength and desires together with all temporal forces and accepting or being joined to Christ.[3]

David Dickson (1583-1663).- Dickson was ordained to the ministry at Irvine in 1618, after serving as a regent, or professor of philosophy, at Glasgow University where he had graduated in 1609. In 1641, he left Irvine to serve as professor of divinity in Glasgow and as one of the ministers of St. Mungo's Church. From 1650 until he was deprived in 1663, he held similar positions in

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[1]J. A. Wylie, editor's footnote, Scots Worthies, p. 176.

[2]Scots Worthies, pp. 186f.

[3]Robert Bruce's Sermons on the Sacrament, trans. John Laidlaw, Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier, pp. 25, 37.

Edinburgh. Almost immediately after his ordination he became embroiled in the resistance to the first episcopacy. He was involved in the ecclesiastical strife of the century nearly all his ministry. Not only did he strive against the bishops of James VI and Charles I, but during the protectorate, he was the most able of the Resolutioners. For refusal to subscribe the oath of supremacy, he was turned out after the Restoration and lived only briefly thereafter.[1]

Although Dickson was one of the outstanding polemicists of the century, he is best remembered for his pastoral labors, especially his preaching. "Reports of the Lord's eminent countenancing" his ministry at Irvine quickly spread throughout all the Church. "His eminent prudence, learning, and holy zeal" were universally respected.[2] John Livingstone in his own day described him as "the greatest Gospel minister in all Scotland."[3] The outstanding characteristic of Dickson's preaching was his skill in pastoral counselling through sermons, by means of which "multitudes were convinced and converted."[4] Of any in his day, he had the happiest and most successful way of gaining the confidence of gentlemen and worker alike and of impressing upon them the importance of religion.[5] From adjacent parishes, as well as his own, came people suffering from perplexity or "soul concern" to hear him preach. Communion services at which Dick-

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[1]R. Wodrow, Biography, II, pp. 6f.; Scots Worthies, pp. 341ff.

[2]Wodrow, op. cit., p. 10.

[3]Analecta, III, p. 9.

[4]Wodrow, op. cit., p. 7.

[5]Analecta, II, p. 116.

son preached were attended by "the most eminent and serious Christians from all corners of the Church." It has been reported that many moved to Irvine simply to be under his pastoral oversight.[1] As a pastor, Dickson was "unwearied and indefatigable, and was universally esteemed by his parishioners."[2]

On Sunday evenings when Dickson returned home from the church, he would find "several scores of serious Christians" waiting in a large hall in the manse. He usually spent an hour or two in personal counselling, "answering their cases, and directing and comforting those who were cast down." In this work, the principles of which will be described later, Dickson had an extraordinary talent. As Wodrow described him, "He had the tongue of the learned, and knew how to speak a word in season to the weary soul." Dickson's week-day sermons were regularly preached on the Monday, market day at Irvine. Those whom he had counselled the night before, together with those drawn from the market, made his week-day sermons as well attended as his Sunday services.[3] The close relationship of Dickson's sermons to the needs of his people is indicated by a tradition that several of Dickson's former parishioners at Irvine went to hear him in Edinburgh after his appointment to the chair of divinity there. After sermon they told him that his sermon lacked the power they had known in Irvine. "It's no wonder I preach not as I used to do, for I want my books! " replied Dickson, meaning that his

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[1]Wodrow, Biography, II, p. 8; Scots Worthies, p. 345.

[2]Fasti, III, p. 98.

[3]Wodrow, op. cit., II, p. 8; Scots Worthies, p. 345.

knowledge of the lives of his parishioners and his understanding of their problems were his best source of sermon materials.

Except for a few examples included in Select Practical Writings,[1] little evidence remains of the sermons Dickson actually preached. Wodrow refers to sermons by Dickson on I Timothy, Jeremiah, Lamentations, and Romans, none of which sermons had then been published and most of which Wodrow had not seen.[2] Alexander Smellie has drawn conclusions about Dickson's sermon style and construction, but the source to which he refers is The Sum of Saving Knowledge. No wonder Smellie refers to his style as cold and methodical![3] Although the content of Dicksons's sermons may be deduced from The Sum of Saving Knowledge and the commentaries Dickson wrote, tradition is the principal source of information about Dickson's style. Wodrow concluded from sermon transcripts "taken from Dickson's mouth," that Dickson's sermons were "full of substantial matter, very scriptural and in a familiar style, not low, but extremely strong, plain and affecting."[4] His technique was declared to be the same as that of Rutherford and Guthrie.[5] Although first-hand details of Dickson's style are scanty, his effectiveness cannot be questioned. His ability to excite deep religious feelings in his hearers has seldom been equalled.[6]

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[1]Edinburgh: Free Church of Scotland, 1845.

[2]Biography, II, p. 15 [3]Op. cit., p. 25.

[4]The sermons on I Timothy mentioned above.

[5]Biography, II, p. 9; cf. Scots Worthies, p. 350.

[6]Cf. J. K. Hewison, The Covenanters, (2 vols.; Glasgow: John Smith and Son, 1913, I, p. 204.

Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661).- After graduation from the University of Edinburgh, Rutherford served there as regent of humanity beginning in 1623.[1] In 1626 he was forced to resign under circumstances that may have been influenced by his inability to agree with the principal.[2] The following year he became minister of Anwoth in Galloway, probably by presbyterial rather than episcopal ordination. As minister of Anwoth, Rutherford established a reputation for ceaseless care of his flock. He rose at three o'clock in the morning and spent his whole time, according to observers, in reading, praying, writing, preaching, catechising, visiting the sick, "and other duties belonging to the ministerial profession and employment."[3] While professor and minister at St. Andrews he continued his ministrations with the same intensity, so that his habits there were described as follows:

> And such was (sic) his unwearied assiduity and diligence, that he seemed to pray constantly, to catechise constantly, and to visit the sick, exhorting them from house to house; to teach as much in the schools, and spend as much time with the students and young men in fitting them for the ministry, as if he had been sequestered from all the world besides; and yet withal to write as much as if he had been constantly shut up in his study.[4]

Throughout his ministry, Rutherford fought forms of church government other than Presbyterianism. He condemned Episcopacy, Independency, Arminianism, Erastianism, and other

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[1] Or "professor of philosophy," Scots Worthies, p. 269.

[2] Hewison, op. cit., I, p. 495.

[3] Scots Worthies, loc. cit.; Analecta, III, p. 88.

[4] Scots Worthies, p. 276.

"errors and heresies of the times" as contrary to the design of God prescribed in scripture. As a result of his conflict with the leaders of the First Episcopacy, he was suspended from his charge at Anwoth and confined to Aberdeen. During his exile in the north, he wrote most of the pastoral letters which have been widely circulated. With the wane of episcopal power, he returned to Anwoth in 1638. He was elected one of the ministers of Edinburgh, but was appointed instead, by the commission of the General Assembly, professor of divinity at St. Andrews where he served concurrently as one of the ministers of the town. When Charles II was restored to the throne, Rutherford's Lex Rex was burned in Edinburgh by the public hangman, and he was summoned to appear before parliament. Death prevented his keeping the appointment.[1]

Rutherford's work as a propagandist[2] and the mysticism[3] which permeated his thought have been examined in scholarly theses. His letters achieved wide popularity almost immediately. Rutherford's skill at scholastic controversy or the beauty and force of his letters would, alone, be sufficient to mark him as an outstanding figure in the Scottish Church, but his reputation as "one of the most moving and affectionate preachers in his

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[1] Scots Worthies, p. 275; Fasti, VII, p. 419.

[2] William M. Campbell, "Samuel Rutherfurd, Propagandist and Exponent of Scottish Presbyterianism," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1937.

[3] C. N. Button, "Scottish Mysticism in the Seventeenth Century (With Special Reference to Samuel Rutherford)", unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1927.

time, or perhaps in any age of the church,"[1] antedates both the flood of his letters poured forth from Aberdeen and the publication of his polemical treatises.[2]

Rutherford the preacher is at once an enraptured, undisciplined poet and a formal theologian. His sermons are filled with "inspired and graphic word painting,"[3] "a riot of imagery,"[4] and are illustrated with scenes drawn from the Bible, love and marriage, home and farm, building, sickness and nursing, sport, law and justice, trade and market, hospitality, and war. So much has been said about the extravagant and sometimes indelicate outbursts of Rutherford's speech that the pedantic theologian who thought and often spoke in syllogism is often obscured.[5] G. D. Henderson best describes the sermon construction of Rutherford when he calls him both mystic and scholastic, who "could speak at one moment of Christ making a box from a chip of the noonday Sun," and in the next discuss election, reprobation, or Gnostic heresy.[6]

Rutherford's delivery was conversational[7] and characterized by "homely but clear expression and graceful elocution."[8] Nevertheless, Rutherford's speech, like his words, was impas-

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[1]Robert Wodrow, The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution (4 vols.; Glasgow: Blackie, Fullerton, 1830, I, p. 205.

[2]Campbell, Triumph, pp. 74,78. [3]Ibid., p. 77.

[4]G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 214.

[5]Ibid., p. 73; Cf. Scots Worthies, p. 273.

[6]G. D. Henderson, op. cit., p. 211.

[7]Bowman, op. cit., p. 166. [8]Scots Worthies, p. 282.

sioned, at times accompanied by a kind of screech, so that he gave the impression that he might fly out of the pulpit when speaking of Christ.[1] The content of Rutherford's sermons differs little from that of his letters. In urging the hearer to accept the proffered Christ, he steers dangerously close to the rock of Arminianism against which he declaims so vigorously in his academic writings. Even so, the message of orthodox Calvinism is clear, if highly colored. The hearer, said Rutherford, must renounce his own virtue and strength and accept all that is offered in Christ.

James Durham (1622-1658).- After studying divinity under Dickson, Durham graduated from Glasgow University in 1647 and was admitted minister of Blackfriars Church, Glasgow the same year. In 1651, he became one of the ministers of St. Mungo's. He is believed to have become professor of divinity at Glasgow when David Dickson moved to Edinburgh, but Fasti makes no mention of his appointment.[2] He was "devout in all parts of his ministerial work," especially at communion services.[3] His conciliatory skill was valued by his contemporaries. In the dispute between the Resolutioners and Protesters, he joined neither side, but sought to compose the difference between them.[4]

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[1] Analecta, III, p. 88.

[2] Scots Worthies, pp. 259ff; Bowman, op. cit., p. 167; Fasti, III, pp. 398, 456; Cf. Fasti, VII, p. 399.

[3] Scots Worthies, p. 262.

[4] Ibid., p. 263; Fasti, III, p. 456.

Durham's style was almost the opposite of Rutherford's. Rutherford, in his sermons, regularly bordered on ecstacy, while Durham rarely displayed emotion in his public ministry of the Word.[1] In comparison with the pulpit work of his contemporaries, Durham's sermons seem cold and prosaic, more suited to the classroom or study than to the needs of a congregation.[2] In preaching, Durham "liked not to soar and hide himself from his hearers in a cloud of words: it was not in the wisdom of words, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power that he taught."[3] Durham's great failing seems to have been his lack of communication with his hearers. Although the theological content of his sermons was considered excellent, Durham apparently lacked the ability to make himself understood by his congregation.[4] As a result, his sermons were not well attended.

At communion services, Durham is reported to have become another personality. Howie relates:

> Then [at communion occasions] he endeavoured, through grace, to rouse and work himself up to such a divineness of frame, as very much suited the spiritual nature and majesty of that ordinance. Yea, at some of these solemn and sweet occasions he spoke some way as a man that had been in heaven, commending Jesus Christ, making a glorious display of grace, and bringing the offers so low, that his hearers were made to think that the rope or cord of salvation offered was let down to sinners, so that those of the lowest stature might catch hold of it.[5]

A similar response was made by Durham when his service was fil-

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[1] Analecta, III. p. 109.

[2] G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 213.

[3] John Carstares, cited, ibid. [4] Analecta, III, p. 108.

[5] Scots Worthies, p. 263.

led with the overflow of those who had come to hear Andrew Gray in another part of the same church.[1]

Of especial interest to this study is the way Durham is reported to have conducted his pastoral counselling. He said almost nothing in private to those who came to him with problems or cases of conscience, "but heard them patiently, and was sure to handle their cases in his sermons."[2]

Robert Leighton (1611-1684).- Leighton graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1631 and spent the following ten years studying and travelling on the continent. In 1641, he was ordained to the parish of Newbattle. Leighton complained that the congregation was too large to be adequately ministered unto and that his voice was too weak to preach to them. Three times he asked to be relieved of his parochial duties and was, in 1653, admitted Principal of Edinburgh University without collateral appointment as one of the ministers of the city. He was consecrated bishop in 1661 at Westminster Abbey and appointed, at his own request, Bishop of Dunblane, the smallest diocese in Scotland. He served as Archbishop of Glasgow, 1671 to 1674. In the latter year, he retired from public life and lived until his death in 1684 at his sister's country home in Sussex.[3]

At Newbattle, Leighton established a reputation as a brilliant preacher[4] and began the type of sermon construction, mentioned previously, which launched a new era in the literary

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[1] Analecta, II, p. 364. [2] Scots Worthies, p. 263.

[3] Fasti, I, p. 332, VII, pp. 323, 338, 381.

[4] E. A. Knox, Robert Leighton, Archbishop of Glasgow, London: James Clarke, 1930, p. 108.

history of the Scottish pulpit, referred to above, the "new school of preachers." William Guthrie went to hear Leighton and described himself as being in heaven while Leighton preached, but unable to remember anything said once outside the church doors.[1] Leighton was not happy in the parish ministry, but his preaching skill was regularly displayed while at Newbattle.[2]

As principal of Edinburgh University, Leighton had more opportunity to indulge his retiring, almost monastic tendencies, withdrawing for days at a time to read and meditate. Too, his preaching style seemed better adapted to the academic community than to the rural parish. Crowds often broke in, according to Gilbert Burnet, when he preached to the students, to the inspiration of all who understood the pure Latin in which he spoke. "His thoughts were lively, apt, out of the way, and surprising, yet just and genuine." His sermons were filled with deftly applied quotations from pagan and Christian classics and marked by "the highest and noblest sense of divine things." His preaching was sublime both in thought and expression, with a grace and gravity of pronunciation that few could hear without marked emotion.[3]

Leighton's sermons excelled in form and style, but appealed almost entirely to the intellect. They were the quiet, reverent, scriptural meditations of a sage, teaching the inwardness of religion and urging the professing Christian to the

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[1] Analecta, II, p. 349.

[2] E. A. Knox, op. cit., pp. 108, 116f.

[3] Cited, ibid., p. 155; G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 217.

practical imitation of Christ.[1] The inwardness of Leighton's religion was the downfall of his ministry. Leighton wrote on the flyleaf of one of his books, "The better a man is, the worse citizen he makes, for he seeks for solitude, and is engaged heart and soul in the contemplation of heavenly things."[2] As Leighton sought to detach himself from the realities of the world about him, he sought also to detach those who heard him. He often referred to current events in his sermons, but always insisted that they were irrelevant or indifferent means to an altogether spiritual end. Although the relationship between temporal sufferings and eternal salvation was a constant theme in seventeenth century Scottish preaching, Leighton apparently failed to understand either that mortal life has a present value or that time can be understood only as a part of eternity. Leighton was an outstanding and original preacher, of great influence on later pulpit style, but he was neither particularly effective as a pastoral preacher nor typical of the seventeenth century Scottish Church.[3]

Hugh Binning (1627-1653).- Binning graduated from Glasgow University in 1646 and continued there as a regent of philosophy. In 1650, he was ordained to Govan parish. He died of consumption in 1653, having been in poor health most of his ministry.[4] His style followed the example of Leighton, as did that of An-

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[1] G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 217.

[2] Trans., E. A. Knox, op. cit., p. 135.

[3] Ibid., p. 156; G. D. Henderson, loc. cit.

[4] Fasti, III, p. 411.

drew Gray. Leighton, Binning and Gray are usually considered the outstanding members of the "new school of preaching."[1]

Binning's style was peculiar to himself, although associated with Leighton's, making use of his great piety, scholastic instincts, high intellectual ability, outstanding memory, vivid imagination, and keen originality.[2] His delivery was easy and fluent, occasionally vehement, but avoiding affectation and bombast. He had "a kind of negligent elegance, which arrested the hearer's attention."[3] Binning's sermons have been described as short and full of matter, expressed in a straightforward manner with a wide vocabulary in an excellent English style.[4] His abandonment of divisions, doctrines, applications, and uses - the typical sermon construction of the period - has been criticised. Wodrow suggests that Binning was concerned at the time of his death about his method of preaching, feeling it did not enable the people to understand him because they were accustomed to hearing divided sermons.[5] Literary devices effectively employed by Binning included alliteration, rhetorical questions, quotations from classical and contemporary literature, and a wealth of metaphor, of which "sin's ugly face," "the legs of the soul," and the "pull of the Father's arm" are typical.[6] Indicative of the esteem in which Binning's sermons were held by his brother ministers is the statement by his neighbor Durham,

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[1]Macleod, op. cit., p. 115.

[2]G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 216.

[3]Scots Worthies, p. 248 [4]Henderson, loc. cit.

[5]Analecta, III, p. 438. [6]Henderson, op. cit., pp. 216ff.

"There is no speaking after Mr. Binning."[1] In spite of Wodrow's criticism, which may be a reaction directed against Leighton, Binning's effect upon his hearers has been described: "Truly he had the tongue of the learned, and knew how to speak a word in season."[2]

Andrew Gray (1634?-1656).- Gray graduated from St. Andrews University in 1651 and two years later was ordained colleague to Patrick Gillespie, an outspoken Protester,[3] in the East Parish, or Outer High Kirk, of Glasgow. Gray died after three years in the ministry and twenty-two years of age in 1656.[4]

In spite of his youth and the brevity of his ministry, Gray was one of the outstanding preachers of his time. When he preached the church was filled. His printed sermons were literally thumbed out of existence.[5] Gray's voice was weak and he spoke in an "odd strange way," but his manner was warm and rapturous, and he was able to stir the consciences and emotions of his hearers. Gray could make men's hair stand on end, according to Durham who preached at the same time as Gray in another part of the same church.[6] His appeals and warnings were powerfully given and in one passage he dwells fully and vividly upon the torture in hell of those who refuse the Gospel.[7] In contrast

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[1] Scots Worthies, p. 249. [2] Ibid.

[3] Fasti, III, p. 462. Charles II held Gillespie to be worse than James Guthrie who was executed in 1661.

[4] Ibid., III, p. 465. [5] Macleod, op. cit., pp. 90f.

[6] Scots Worthies, p. 251.

[7] G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, pp. 211f.

with Durham, who had trouble making himself understood, Gray's greatest ability as a preacher, according to Howie's report, was his ordering of his subject matter so that it would be well received by every hearer. He could express an ordinary subject so that it would delight an erudite audience and at the same time be so unpretentious as to be understood by the uneducated. His theological training was so thorough that he had no trouble explaining its mysteries to those with the "meanest capacity." Gray "had so learned Christ; and being a man of most zealous temper" the principal purpose of his life was to awaken people to "their dangerous state by nature, and to persuade them to believe and lay hold of the great salvation."[1] His sermons were evangelical, without scholastic display, but urging his hearers to embrace the Gospel or to close with Christ."[2]

Chiefly on the evidence of Robert Baillie, who was a member of the presbytery which admitted Gray to his charge, it has been believed that Gray, following Leighton, preached his sermons without the many divisions which characterized most preaching of the century.[3] An examination of the sermons themselves shows them to be as divided and sub-divided as most others of the time. Gray's style was not, however, without its distinctive features. His sermons have little in way of content or illustration apart from the Bible. A device used by Gray to emphasize a point is the summoning of a succession of Bible char-

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[1] Scots Worthies, p. 251.

[2] G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 212.

[3] Letters and Journals, III, p. 258.

acters. For example, He describes the astonishment our arrival in heaven would cause for Enoch, Abraham, Jacob, Job, Nathanael, Josiah, and Paul. In another sermon, he sees in his congregation Gallio, Pilate, Felix, Balaam, Agrippa, Judas, and Esau.[1]

William Guthrie (1620-1665).- Guthrie was graduated in 1638 from St. Andrews University where his studies were directed by his cousin, James Guthrie, a regent of philosophy. He studied divinity there under Samuel Rutherford, whose influence is apparent in his preaching. After being licensed by the presbytery of St. Andrews in 1642, he served as tutor to the eldest son of the first Earl of Loudon. In 1644, he was ordained to the parish of Fenwick or "Newkirk of Kilmarnock." In the years immediately following his ordination, he spent much time away from his parish as a chaplain with the army. He refused to submit to Episcopacy and was deprived in 1664, retiring to his home in Angus.[2]

A detailed picture of Guthrie both as a man and as a preacher has survived. Factors which may have contributed to the extent and accuracy of our knowledge of Guthrie include the special interest in his ministry shown by Wodrow and Howie. Wodrow, who both in his writings and in his manuscript collection contributed much to our knowledge of Guthrie, married one of Guthrie's grand-daughters.[3] Howie of Lochgoin resided in Fenwick parish. Both had access to the traditions of Guthrie's

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[1]G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 212.

[2]Fasti, III, pp. 93f.

[3]Scots Worthies, p. 379; Wodrow, Biography, II, p. 56.

ministry, as well as to the documentary remains. Too, the notes of the sermons Guthrie preached throughout most of his ministry have been preserved, largely through the efforts of Wodrow. In his own time, Guthrie was highly regarded. Many anecdotes about him and many of his sermons were recorded. The modern reader is indebted to Howard O. Bowman for his exhaustive study of Guthries's life.[1] Bowman has reconstructed Guthrie's life and work with infinite detail and has tabulated and analysed his sermons. Bowman's research has shown that the remains of Guthrie's pulpit ministry are far more extensive than usually believed.[2] It is possible, therefore, not only to describe Guthrie's style, but to speak of the content of Guthrie's pulpit ministry to an extent not possible with other ministers of his period.

When Guthrie went to Fenwick, he was faced with the task of making a remote and neglected area, recently detached from the parish of Kilmarnock, into a worshipping parish. Howie, who lived in Fenwick parish described the majority of the people as rude and barbarous. Not only did they never attend church services, but eberything concerning religion was distasteful to them. Many refused to be visited or catechised by the minister. Even admission to their houses was denied the minister. Since his face was unknown to this type of parishioner, Guthrie called on them incognito. Often he posed as a traveller seeking lodging. After thus gaining entrance to the house, he would engage the family in "general amusing conversation," eventually asking them how they liked their minister. When the reply was given

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[1] Op. cit.

[2] Ibid, pp. 197ff.

that they did not go to church, he insisted they go on a trial basis. Guthrie even hired some of his parishioners to come to church. One man regularly spent Sundays fowling, telling Guthrie that he made more money on the Sabbath than on any other day. Guthrie paid him the amount he expected to earn by a Sunday's hunting, on condition that he would attend church instead. After sermon, Guthrie agreed to pay him a similar amount to return the following Sunday. The fowler "from that time afterwards never failed to keep the church"[1] and released Guthrie from his promise to pay for his attendance. Guthrie, an excellent curler, fowler, and fisherman,[2] used his participation in sports for the "nobler ends of his ministry." He used his sporting skill to gain the acceptance and affection of his people. As a sportsman "he gained some to a religious life, whom he could have had little influence upon in a minister's gown."[3] It must be noted that Guthrie used recreation as a means of drawing people to the preached Word, which he held to be the real source of pastoral care. In spite of the attractiveness of diversions, Guthrie recognized no other means of communicating Christ and affirmed that the only happy folk in the world are those who come to Christ by hearing the saving report of Him. For this reason, he advised that each one needs always to be thinking about coming to Christ through preaching.[4]

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[1] Scots Worthies, pp. 377ff. [2] Bowmam, op. cit. Chap. I.

[3] Scots Worthies, loc. cit.

[4] MS "Sermons Preached by Willaim Guthrie," Aberdeen University Library.

Guthrie's preaching style was "every way singular, and very much up to the Apostolical rule apt to teach."[1] Guthrie's appearance was impressive, his voice clear, strong, and often filled with emotion. He spoke with authority in a broad Scots tongue, using language all could understand.[2] His message was interesting, beguiling, and challenging. He kept "faithfully and fearlessly to realities," both of human nature and of the forces acting on his hearers. Guthrie made the ministered Word winsome rather than awful, "equally effective in converting the sinner, pacifying the troubled and stirring the complacent."[3]

In common with most other ministers of his time, Guthrie began his sermons with a lengthy exposition of the text and drew several observations from it, "in which he was many times surprising."[4] Texts for Guthrie's regular preaching at Fenwick were taken from an "ordinary."[5] He would select a book or chapter of scripture and preach right through it, sometimes preaching several sermons on the same verse or part of a verse. Guthrie preferred to use an "ordinary" instead of random texts because he felt texts "suitable to his peoples case" were thus provided by Providence rather than by his own choice.[6] Guthrie preached from notes, which he "enlarged" in the pulpit, "wherein he was singular and happy in his close application to con-

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[1]Wodrow, MS "Life of Guthrie," p. 16. [2]Ibid., p. 17.

[3]G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 210.

[4]Wodrow, op. cit., p. 16. [5]Supra, p. 76f.

[6]Bowman, op. cit., p. 208.

sciences, and homely and yet pertinent allusions, and illustrations, in the dialect and suited to the capacity of his hearers."[1] Because Guthrie added his illustrations as he preached, most of his illustrations have been lost, except for those contained in transcripts made of his sermons by auditors. An overall picture of his style was given by Wodrow:

> In the explication of his doctrines he very fully informed the judgement, and in his application he dealt closely with the conscience so that it was hard to stand out against his light and heat. His style was peculiar to himself. In matters relative to the times and public sin and duty, he kept so close by apposite Scripture expressions as no offense could justly be taken, and yet pointed out things so plainly as he that runs might read them. In the ordinary course of preaching he spoke to the people in their own dialect, and yet was never mean and low in his expressions. He brought fit similitudes enlargements and matter of argument from so plain and known things, and in so homely and intelligible a way as his hearers could not get by understanding him.... By this with the solidity and suitableness of his matter he had great success in awakening secure consciences, and yet greater in quieting troubled minds, and answering their various doubts objections temptations and exercises. When at this part of his work he was in his element, and spoke all that was in the hearts of his hearers, so that they understood their case, and had an answer to what was damping or difficult in it at once.[2]

Summary

The public ministry of the Word in seventeenth century was understood to be, with the private ministry of the Word, the real source of all pastoral care. The preaching of the Word was not just Biblical exposition, but an application of the "doctrines" contained in the selected text to the spiritual needs of the auditors.

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[1]Wodrow, "MS Life of Guthrie," p. 16. [2]Ibid., p. 17.

Sermons were long, complex in structure, but as delivered by the superior preachers of the period, sermons and their associated services of worship were not only the most important literary and social events of most parishes, but were the most powerful spiritual force employed by the Church.

CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY, AND BURIAL OF THE DEAD

CHAPTER IV

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Administration of the Sacraments

Calvin on the Sacraments.-

The Nature of the Sacraments.- Calvin defined a sacrament as an "external sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences his promises of good-will toward us, in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, and in which we may testify our piety towards him."[1] A sacrament was understood to consist of "the Sign, the Thing signified, the Promise, and the general Participation."[2] In the Reformed scheme of pastoral care, the sacraments were to be used in conjunction with the preached Word, in much the same way that illustrations may be placed in a book. For example, the text of a book on boiler construction may in itself contain full and detailed information on its subject, but in order to make the information in the text more readily understandable and useful, drawings, photographs, and charts will be added. Therefore, although the proclaimed Word is complete in itself, fully presenting Christ and His promises, and is its own best valida-

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[1] Institutes, IV.xiv.1 [2] Ibid., Aphorism 81.

tion,[1] God has added to the Word the sacraments, which "bring into view the kind intentions of God." The sacraments, Calvin said, display Christ more vividly than anything else since His ministry in the flesh, "for Baptism testifies that we are washed and purified; the Supper of the Eucharist that we are redeemed. Absolution is figured by water, sanctification by blood."[2] Although these two chief benefits of Christ have been declared in the Word, they are represented in the sacraments because of our ignorance, sluggishness, and infirmity.[3] Because of our animal nature, our faith is constantly in need of props. Our faith can rest only on the Word as its foundation, but it rests more securely when buttressed by the sacraments.[4] In other words, the sacraments may not replace the Word or even improve it, but because of our simplicity, the sacraments should help the believer stabilize his faith and make the proper use of the Word. Calvin distinguished between sacraments and "other ceremonies," the former being limited to baptism and the Lord's Supper, which he described as the only ceremonies prescribed for continued performance by the Church.[5]

Efficacy of the Sacraments.- Calvin insisted that "the office of the sacraments differs not from the Word of God; and this is to hold forth and offer Christ to us, and, in him, the treasures of heavenly grace."[6] Like the Word, sacraments announce rather than

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[1] Ibid., IV.xiv.3.

[2] Ibid., IV.xiv.22.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., IV.xiv.6.

[5] Ibid., IV.xix.2.

[6] Ibid., IV.xiv.17.

bestow grace. Of themselves they are able to confer nothing and avail nothing, except as they are received in faith. Faith might be said to be the cup in which the benefits of the sacraments are received. The riches of Christ are poured out in the sacraments to all, the elect and the ungodly alike, but each partaker receives only so much as his faith will contain.[1] Since faith itself is given only to the elect by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the sacraments are of benefit only to the elect. In the elect, the Holy Spirit prepares the way for the sacrament, conducts it to the soul, and causes it to bear fruit.[2]

Administration Restricted to the Ministry.- Administration of the sacraments was reserved to the ministry since, said Calvin, Christ did not command anyone but apostles to baptise or serve the Lord's Supper.[3]

The Scottish Reformation.- Before 1560, Scottish thought on the sacraments primarily concerned the repudiation of the Roman doctrine. In 1547, Knox debated with a group of Roman clergy on the proposition that "sacraments of the New Testament ought to be ministered as they were instituted by Christ Jesus, and practised by his Apostles."[4] All ecclesiastical ceremonies not commanded by scripture were denied sacramental status. Shortly after the debate, Knox celebrated the Lord's Supper, as part of a preaching service, "in the same purity that now [1566] it is

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[1] Ibid., IV.xiv.16f.

[2] Ibid., IV.xiv.7.

[3] Ibid., IV.xv.20.

[4] Works, I, pp. 194ff.

ministrate in the churches of Scotland."[1] An interesting note was added to Knox's relation of the communion when he told of one of the conspirators in the castle who refused to participate in the communion because he "was brought up in Martin's [Luther's] opinion of the sacrament."[2] McMillan has described the order for communion used by Knox at Berwick-onTweed in 1549-50 and has pointed out not only its dependence on Swiss precedent, but the necessity that preaching immediately precede the administration.[3] Of the sacraments Knox administered in Scotland before the Reformation was accomplished, the only conclusive evidence is that the sacrament was never administered apart from the preached Word. Of Reformed baptismal practice before 1560 little can be said except that it was, in fact, a part of the work expected of the ministry.[4]

When the Church of Scotland was reformed, its earliest standards, in general, restated the Genevan doctrine of the sacraments. The Scots Confession (1560) thus described the nature of the sacraments:

> Sacraments...were instituted of God, not only to make a visible difference betwixt his people, and those that were without his league; but also to exercise the faith of his children; and by participation of the same sacraments, to seal in their hearts the assurance of his promise, and of that most blessed conjunction, union, and society, which the Elect have with their head, Jesus Christ. And thus we utterly damn the vanity of those that affirm Sacraments to be nothing else but naked and bare signs. No, we assuredly believe, that by Baptism we are ingrafted in Christ Jesus to be made partakers of his justice, by the which our sins are covered and remitted; and also, that in the Supper, rightly used, Christ

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[1] Ibid., I, pp. 201f.

[2] Ibid., I, p. 202.

[3] Op. cit., pp. 25ff.

[4] Ibid., p. 23.

> Jesus is so joined with us, that he becomes the very nourishment and food of our souls.[1]

As shown here, the Scots Reformers held a "high" view of the sacraments, flatly rejecting the concept that the sacraments were symbols only. At the same time they fought to dissipate the fog of magic and superstition surrounding the Roman administration of the sacraments. They argued that the benefits of the sacraments were not due to anything in the nature of the sacrament, but were conveyed by the Holy Spirit and required to be received in faith. Feeling that reception of the sacraments in faith depended, in part, on adequate religious knowledge, the Reformers required intending communicants to know the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments.[2]

For sacraments to be truly administered, it was necessary, first, "that they be ministered by lawful ministers, whom we affirm to be only they that are appointed to the preaching of the word, or into whose mouths God has put some sermon of exhortation." Secondly, they must be administered precisely as prescribed by God.[3] That is, the sacraments were to be annexed to the Gospel truly preached, as "seals and visible confirmations of the spiritual promises contained in the word."[4] The sacraments are received by the elect through faith and are made effectual in the elect by the Holy Spirit.[5]

The Seventeenth Century Church of Scotland.- Sacramental doc-

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[1] xxi. [2] BOD, ix.

[3] Scots Confession, xxii. [4] BOD, ii.

[5] Scots Confession, xxi.

trine and practice of the seventeenth century Scottish Church closely followed the precept and example of the Reformers. For example, the language of Calvin is echoed in the definition by the Westminster Assembly of a sacrament as a holy sign and seal "of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and his benefits, and to confirm our interest in him." Participation in the sacraments made a visible difference between the members of the "house and family of God," and the rest of the world, and solemnly engaged the participants to the "service of God in Christ, according to the Word."[1] In describing the composition of a sacrament, the thought of Calvin was again followed. A sacrament was understood to consist of two parts, an outward and visible sign, "used according to Christ's own appointment," and the inward and spiritual grace signified by the sign.[2] The sacraments of communion and baptism only were recognized.[3] Because these sacraments were a part of the ministry of the Word, they could not be "administered in any case by any private person but by a minister of Christ, called to be the steward of the mysteries of God.[4]

Preaching and administration of the sacraments were described as having the same pastoral operation, the former approaching the soul through the ear, the latter through the eye.[5]

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[1] Confession of Faith, xxvii.1 [2] Larger Catechism, 163.

[3] Confession of Faith, xxvii.4; Larger Catechism, 164.

[4] Confession of Faith, xxvii,4; "Directory for Public Worship," p. 149; "Directory for Church Government," p. 173.

[5] Robert Bruce, Robert Bruce's Sermons on the Sacrament, trans. John Laidlaw, Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1901, p. 1.

The sacraments were understood to be a visual supplement to the spoken Word. The spoken Word to which the sacrament was affixed was required to contain "a promise of benefit to worthy receivers," as well as the Biblical precept authorizing the use of the sacrament.[1] Both the dependence upon the preached Word and the visual essence of the sacrament are implied by the requirement that sacraments be administered "in the place of public worship, and in the face of the congregation, where the people may most conveniently see and hear."[2] Exceptions to this requirement, discussed later, were sometimes made, but the Church felt strongly enough about the importance of public celebration of the sacraments in conjunction with the preached Word, that several ministers were deprived for irregular administration of the sacraments, especially baptism.[3]

The Lord's Supper.-

Popularity.- The celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was an occurrence of great popular importance in the life of the seventeenth century Scottish Church. Communion, popularly known as "the sacrament," with the anticipation and preparation that accompanied it, was, in effect, a religious festival with an emotional intensity rarely equalled in the routine of the ordinary parish. Participation in "a sacrament," was a major religious experience. In 1676, Alexander Brodie wrote, "My soul longs for Thee in that ordinance, which thou

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[1] Confession of Faith, xxvii.3.

[2] "Directory for Public Worship," p. 149. [3] See Fasti.

hast not enjoined without cause."[1] Communion was so highly regarded that David Dickson warned against considering communion in itself adequate care for the soul, "as if the coming to the communion were like the confession made to the Papist priests and their absolutions."[2] Participation in the Lord's Table was a privilege not lightly extended by the Church. Those who were eligible to participate in the communion of their own parish, but failed to do so were subjected to the processes of church discipline.[3] The most severe penalty exercised by the Church, except for excommunication, was exclusion from the Lord's Supper.[4]

As the century advanced, attendance at communion services became quite large. Kirkton described a typical seventeenth century Scottish communion as the gathering of many congregations in great multitudes where dozens of ministers would preach "and the people continued, as it were, in a sort of trance...for three days at least."[5] Although Kirkton usually exaggerates to emphasise the advantages of Presbyterian order, there is considerable evidence to show that his enthusiasm was

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[1]The Diary of Alexander Brodie of Brodie 1652-1680 and of His Son James Brodie of Brodie 1680-1685, Aberdeen: Spaulding Club, 1863, p. 359.

[2]Select Practical Writings, p. 133.

[3]Anderson, op. cit., p. 89.

[4]"Directory for Church Government," p. 177.

[5]James Kirkton, The Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland (1660-1678), Edinburgh: Longman, Rees, Orme, & Brown, 1817, p. 55.

not ungrounded. When John Livingstone was minister at Stranraer, his semi-annual communions were attended by as many as five hundred of his former parishioners at Killinch.[1] After Samuel Rutherford left Anwoth, many of his admirers went from Galloway to St. Andrews to participate in communion services he conducted there.[2] "The most eminent Christians, from all corners of the Church, came and joined with" David Dickson at his communions, "which were indeed times of refreshing from the Lord."[3] William Guthrie drew multitudes to his communion celebrations during the inter-regnum and the early years of the Restoration.[4] Communions at field meetings after the Restoration were said to be marked by "signal tokens of the Lord's presence." Communicants returned to their homes "with joy unspeakable."[5] The romantic circumstances of these services, with posted sentries and imminent danger, sometimes obscure the fact that this type of communion celebration was not a party innovation, but the continuation of a long established custom.

Some indication of popular participation in the sacrament may be given by this account of a communion in Ayr about 1640:

> July 9. he visits the Town, in order to take up the names of the people for examination. Sept. 9. The communion is Intimate, as designed Sept. 16, and that day

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[1] Fasti, II, p. 99.

[2] Analecta, II, p. 285.

[3] Scots Worthies, p. 345.

[4] Wodrow, MS "Life of Guthrie," p. 12.

[5] Wodrow, The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution (4 vols.; Glasgow: Blackie, Fullerton, 1830, I, p. 393.

> keeped as a fast, and the minister intimates, that the session appoints, that none presume to come to the communion who refuse to agree with their neighbors, or deny to subscribe the Covenant. Seot. 16. The first Sabbath, the communion is given by Mr. Robert Blair....29 tables each table holding 6 score, and the service table 24. Gathered for the poor that day 54 lb. 3 shill: 4 pennies Scots. Sept. 22 Being Saturday, Mr. John Ferguson, minister at Ochiltrea, taught in the afternoon on Heb: 10.5. On Sunday Sept 23, Mr. Robert Blair taught, and served 4 tables, Mr. David Dick, minister at Irvine, served 4. Mr. John Ferguson two, Mr. Hugh McCail 2, In all, 12. Gathered for the poor 92 lb. 4 sh: 6 pennies.[1]

Both the large numbers of communicants and the generosity of the offerings indicate the value placed upon communion be the populace.

Theory.- The Scottish Church, in its understanding of the nature of the Lord's Supper, repudiated both transubstantiation and the concept that the sacrament was a symbol or commemoration only. In the case of the latter, there are indications that the Scottish Reformers were accused of taking such a position. Whoever so accused them, they insisted, spoke against a manifest truth.[2] Following Calvin, they described communion as the means by which "Christ Jesus is so joined with us, that he becomes the very nourishment and food of our souls." The union of the communicant with the body and blood of Christ is wrought by the Holy Spirit, by Whom we are carried "above all things that are visible, carnal, and earthy." The essence of the Scottish doctrine of the Lord's Supper is expressed thus in the Scots Confession (1560):

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[1] Scots Confession, xxi. [2] Ibid.

> We confess, and undoubtedly believe, that the faithful, in the right use of the Lord's Table, so do eat the body, and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus, that he remaineth in them and they in him: yea, that they are so made flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones, that as the eternal Godhead hath given to the flesh of Christ Jesus (which of the own condition and nature was mortal and corruptible) life and immortality, so doth Christ Jesus his flesh and blood eaten and drunked by us, give to us the same prerogatives:...[1]

These benefits are brought about not by the "proper power and virtue of the Sacraments only," but by true faith which works in ways not understood by natural man.

The Responsibility of the Minister.- The use of the Lord's Supper as a means of pastoral care in the seventeenth century Church of Scotland was a complicated process, the responsibility for most of which fell upon the minister. Before communion could be celebrated, it was necessary that communicants be catechised and examined on their knowledge of the faith. Similarly, the communicant's roll was examined and permission to communicate denied those who were under disciplinary process. A sermon of preparation had to be preached and often a day of fasting observed before the day of celebration. After communion, it was customary that a sermon of thanksgiving be preached.

Examination of Communicants.- As the time appointed for celebration of the Lord's Supper approached, communicants were examined both as to knowledge and as to character. The Book of Discipline states that administration of the Table should be preceded by due examination, "especially of those whose know-

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[1] Ibid.

ledge is suspect." In preparing his communicants, the minister was warned to be "more careful to instruct the ignorant than ready to satisfy their appetites." In his examination, the minister was to be more sharp than indulgent. The Book of Discipline had this to say about the extent of knowledge required of intending communicants: "We think that none are apt to be admitted to that Mystery who cannot formally say the Lord's Prayer, the Articles of the Belief, and declare the sum of the Law."[1] Examination was to be held publicly every year. In addition to the minimum prescribed above, examinees were expected to be able to answer questions put by the minister on the "chief points of Religion." "Such as be ignorant in the Articles of their Faith; understand not, nor cannot rehearse the Commandments of God; know not how to pray; neither whereunto their righteousness consists, ought not to be admitted to the Lord's Table." Those who deliberately persisted in their ignorance were to be excommunicated.[2] Frequent references to such examinations were made in session minutes of the early Reformed Church.[3] For example, the session of Perth, in 1595 mentioned that in spite of a "yearly trial and examination before the celebration of the Supper of the Lord," many of the congregation were "found ignorant of the principles and grounds of religion."[4] In 1590, the General Assembly enacted that a uniform order for pre-communion examination be drawn

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Edgar, op. cit., pp. 119f.

[4] Cited, ibid.

up by John Craig, Robert Pont, Thomas Buchanan, and Andrew Melville, but the order, if one was prepared, was never adopted.[1] Two years later, the Assembly approved Craig's Short Catechism as "A Form of Examination before the Communion" and directed that it be used instead of the Little Catechism of Geneva.[2]

Such examinations continued throughout the seventeenth century, although the extent of the knowledge required and the strictness of enforcement varied widely. For example, Andrew Cant was appointed by a committee of Assembly in 1641 minister of St. Nicholas' Aberdeen, following a period of relaxed admission to the Lord's Table. When he insisted that no one be admitted to the communion without thorough examination, the town council protested against his strictness. They charged he would admit only those who, "as in a pharisaical way, offered themselves to be tried by him and those whom he called his Elders."[3] Cant considered his parishioners ignorant and withheld communion from them for two years, until they could be catechised.

Pre-communion examinations concerned not only knowledge, but also behavior. Only those free from scandal were to be admitted to the Lord's Table. The General Assembly required that the names of those offenders who had not yet satisfied the demands of discipline be intimated from the pulpit before communion. Livingstone related that, about 1630, it was the custom for delinquents to confess their faults before the congregation.

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[1] BUKS, p. 348. [2] Ibid., 359.

[3] Cited by Edgar, op. cit., p. 121.

at the preparation sermon. Those who so confessed were absolved and given permission to communicate. Delinquents who failed to make this public satisfaction were debarred from communion and their "names, scandals, and impenitence" published to the congregation. This procedure, said Livingstone, produced such terror that few hesitated to submit to discipline.[1]

The minister's responsibility for administration of church discipline preliminary to communion was not limited to his pre-communion examination of communicants. He was expected to deny the sacraments to those whose lives made them unworthy recipients. Gilbert Burnet urged any minister that knew "any one of his parish guilty of eminent sins" to go to the offender and admonish him to choose between changing his life and keeping from the Lord's Table. If private admonition failed, the minister must deny the sacrament until the delinquent edified the church as much by his repentance as previously he scandalized it by his disorder.[2] It is recorded that John Semple stopped a neighboring minister from giving a token to a certain woman on the ground that she was a witch. Unfortunately, the story continues that although no one had reason to suspect her of witchcraft, she confessed and was put to death.[3]

In the service of the Lord's Supper itself, the minister was to pronounce a "doctrinal excommunication." The Book of Common Order prescribed that after the scriptural warrant for

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[1]Cited, ibid., p. 125.

[2]Discourse of the Pastoral Care, Dublin: J. Hyde, 1726, p. 155.

[3]Scots Worthies, p. 443.

the celebration of the sacrament is read the minister is to deliver an invitatory exhortation. In his invitation the minister "in the name and authority of the Eternal God and of His Lord Jesus Christ" bars from the table all impenitent "blasphemers, idolators, murderers and adulterers," as well as "all that be in envy or malice, all disobedient persons to Father or Mother, Princes or Magistrates, Pastors or preachers, all thieves, and deceivers of their neighbors," and those who, in general, live lives opposed to the will of God.[1] The emphasis, as pointed out by McMillan,[2] of the exhortation is placed upon the invitation rather than the exclusion. No penitent person was to be excluded, regardless of the gravity of his transgressions. The Westminster "Directory for Public Worship" prescribes a similar exhortation in which the minister, in the name of Christ, warns against eating and drinking unworthily all those that are "ignorant, scandalous, profane, or that live in any sin of offense against their conscience."[3] In the seventeenth century, elaborations on the grounds for exclusion, as pronounced by individual ministers sometimes rose to heights not intended by the Reformers.[4] In contrast with this abuse of the warning against unworthy participation in the sacrament, it was said of William Guthrie that he rarely used doctrinal excommunication. Guthrie did not, however, favour admission of anyone who presented him-

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[1]Knox, Works, IV, pp. 192f; VI, p. 324.

[2]Op. cit., p. 164. [3]P. 153.

[4]Henry Gray Graham, The Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century (2 vols. London: A. & C. Black, 1899, pp. 309f.

self for communion, but never permitted any intending communicants to enter his church without tokens.[1] At a communion in Glasgow, some officers of the occupying English army came forward "without acquainting the minister, or being in a due manner found worthy of that privilege." As they left their pews to come down to the table, Guthrie, who was serving, "spoke to them...with such gravity, resolution and zeal, that they were quite confounded, and sat down without making any further disturbance."[2] In such ways ministers of seventeenth century Scotland sought to insure not only that the Lord's Supper was administered to those for whom it meant spiritual nourishment, but that no one through design or accident ate and drank the Lord's Supper to his own damnation.

The Sermon of Preparation.- From the early days of the Reformation, it was the custom in some parishes to have preached a sermon of preparation on the Saturday immediately preceding the administration of the Lord's Supper. For example, such was the practice in Canongait parish in 1567.[3] By the beginning of the seventeenth century the holding of such services was fairly widespread.[4] McMillan suggests that the sermon of preparation may be a continuation of the Roman practice in Scotland, pointing out that in 1558, Archbishop Hamilton published a "Godly Exhortation" to be used by the celebrant before "Ministration of

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[1] Wodrow, MS "Life of Guthrie," p. 18.

[2] Ibid., p. 10; Scots Worthies, p. 381.

[3] McMillan, op. cit., p. 225. [4] Edgar, op. cit., pp. 125f.

the Sacrament of the altar."[1] Evidence as to when this exhortation was to be read is inconclusive. It is probable that it was to be used just before the mass. If so, it should be identified with the exhortation at the beginning of the Reformed service of communion, rather than with the service of preparation.

The Westminster "Directory for Public Worship" provided that where the sacrament could not be celebrated frequently, public warning of the coming event was to be given the Sunday preceding. At that time - that is, during the regular service of worship - or at a special service on some day during the week before the celebration, "something concerning that ordinance, and the due preparation thereunto, and participation thereof" was to be taught by the minister.[2] This provision for a sermon of preparation was included at the insistence of the Scottish commissioners. Baillie reported that the Independents would have no "catechising nor preparation before, no sacramental doctrine or chapters in the day of the celebration," but that the Scots won the point after much debate.[3] The General Assembly, in 1645, formalized the practice of the preceding decades by requiring that there be preached a sermon of preparation in the parish's ordinary place of worship on the day immediately preceding the celebration of the Lord's Supper.[4]

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[1]Cited by McMillan, op. cit., pp. 225f.

[2]p. 152.

[3]Letters and Journals, II, p. 91.

[4]Act of Assembly, 1645.

Sacramental Fasts.- The observance of a fast, as much as a week in duration, in preparation for communion was widely practiced in seventeenth century Scotland. Fasting as a means of appeasing the wrath of God, had been practiced by the Church of Scotland from the early days of the Reformation.[1] Fasting, in connection with communion, was never required by the General Assembly, but emerged from the practices of individual congregations.[2] It would not have been difficult for the Church to have associated the attempt to reconcile itself to the will of God through fasting with the atonement commemorated in the Lord's Supper. Calderwood related that a public fast was appointed for the last two Sundays in July 1566, "in respect of the dangers imminent wherewith the kirk is like to be assaulted, and that the Lord's Supper be ministered upon the same day if it can be done conveniently."[3] There is nothing in the account to indicate that the fast and the communion were consciously related, but provides a clue as to how the fast became a step in the preparation of the congregation for communion.

The sacramental fast was not widely practiced until after 1650, although the Westminster Assembly made no mention of fasts to be held in connection with communion. Edgar holds that the sacramental fast became popular in mid-century as a part of the program of spiritual austerity insisted upon by the Protesters, over the objections of the Resolutioners.[4] Under the

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[1]Church of Scotland, The Order and Doctrine of the General Fast, Edinburgh: Robt. Lekprevik, 1566.

[2]Op. cit., pp. 126f.

[3]History, II, p. 324.

[4]Op. cit., p. 129.

second Episcopacy, the observance of sacramental fasts continued in many parishes.[1] Although a feature of the process of communion in many parishes in seventeenth century Scotland,[2] especially in the second half of the century, sacramental fasting did not reach the peak of its popularity until the century following and could be said to be more typical of eighteenth than seventeenth century communion practice.[3]

Thanksgiving after Communion.- Like the sacramental fast, the practice of holding a service of thanksgiving on "Communion Monday," grew up in seventeenth century Scotland spontaneously, rather than as a result of Biblical or ecclesiastical precept.[4] The best known thanksgiving service was that held after communion at Shotts in 1630, when John Livingstone's preaching began a revival of great influence.[5] There is evidence that the sacred nature of the Monday observance was interfered with by too much relaxation from the emotional turbulence of the long and exciting process of communion.[6]

The Service of Communion.- Before the meeting of the

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[1]Walter Roland Foster, Bishop and Presbytery, London: S.P.C.K., 1958, p. 150; McMillan, op. cit., p. 226.

[2]Edgar and McMillan disagree as to the extent to which sacramental fasts were observed during the first half of the seventeenth century. The former holds that the practice spread until the first few years of the seventeenth century, then declined, op. cit., p. 226; while the latter maintains that the practice was common throughout the first half of the century, op. cit., pp. 127f.

[3]Edgar, op. cit., p. 129.

[4]Ibid., 135.

[5]Scots Worthies, p. 432.

[6]Edgar, op. cit., p. 136.

Westminster Assembly, the Church of Scotland followed the example of the Genevan Church in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The leaders of the Reformation adopted the Genevan practice, with some added material from the Book of Common Prayer, more or less spontaneously.[1] Therefore, when the General Assembly in 1562 directed that the order of the Church of Geneva be followed for administration of the sacraments, the Assembly was ratifying existing practice rather than initiating a new order.[2] The sources of the Scottish Reformed communion rites have been traced by McMillan[3] and Maxwell.[4] McMillan has, in addition, given details of variations in practice until 1638. It will be sufficient here to set forth the form generally followed.

By definition, it was necessary that the Lord's Supper be preceded immediately by the preaching of the Word, to which it was attached as a seal is attached to a diploma.[5] Therefore, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, as directed by the Book of Common Order,[6] was a combination of a regular preaching service and an annexed communion service. Using the terminology of catholic worship, Maxwell designates these two parts "the Liturgy of the Word" and the "Liturgy of the Upper Room."[7]

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[1] McMillan, op. cit., p. 164. [2] BUKS, p. 13.

[3] Op. cit., pp. 163ff.

[4] William D. Maxwell, An Outline of Christian Worship, Oxford: University Press, 1936, pp. 120ff.

[5] Supra, 115f. [6] Knox, Works, IV, 191f.; VI, p. 324.

[7] Op. cit., p. 123.

The combined service began with a confession of sins and a prayer for pardon. A metrical psalm was then sung and another prayer, for illumination, was offered. The scripture lesson and sermon completed the "Liturgy of the Word." Prayers, of thanksgiving and intercession and the Lord's Prayer, possibly preceded by the collection of alms, began the second part of the service, the "Liturgy of the Upper Room." The Apostles' Creed was recited and the elements were brought into the sanctuary while a psalm was sung. The Words of Institution, or scriptural warrant, were read and an exhortation delivered. The exhortation served as an invitation to the Lord's Table. In it, the minister, in the name and with the authority of God and Christ, excluded all unrepentant sinners. It has been mentioned above that this doctrinal excommunication was not intended to bar from communion any penitent sinner, regardless of his sin, but only those who were unrepentant.[1] It should be added that, as a rule, sessions made themselves judges of the validity of repentance. A prayer of consecration was offered and the minister took bread and broke it. The bread was given to the people who passed it among themselves. The cup was passed, although it is not clear whether it was customary to wait until all had partaken of the bread before the cup was passed. The elements were received first by the celebrant and his assistants,[2] then distributed to the people, who were seated at tables specially placed in the

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[1] p. 129.

[2] For a description of the elder's role in distribution of the elements, see G. D. Henderson, Scottish Ruling Elder, chap. ii.

church for the service. A psalm was often sung, either while the tables were being filled or while the elements were being distributed. A brief prayer of thanksgiving followed the "action," as the communion itself was called. The one hundred and third psalm or an alternative was then sung and the people were dismissed with the benediction.[1]

As the Westminster Assembly understood the communion service, the "Liturgy of the Word" was the regular Sunday preaching service, from which the final psalm and blessing were deleted. Although the "Directory for Public Worship" directs that the minister after his sermon and prayer, "shall make a short exhortation," Maxwell concludes that before this exhortation, the communion table was covered and upon it placed the elements, during the singing of the psalm which would usually come at the same point in the regular Sunday service.[2] This psalm marked the beginning of the "Liturgy of the Upper Room." In the exhortation, the minister described the benefits and values of the sacrament. In the name of Christ, he warned "all such as are ignorant, scandalous, profane, or live in any sin or offense against their knowledge or conscience" against coming to the table. On the authority of the Lord, he was to urge all "that labour under the sense of the burden of their sins, and fear of wrath" and hope for increased grace in their lives to come to the table, assuring them of ease, refreshment, and strength for their weary souls. After the communicants had seated themselves about the table, the minister set apart the elements from all

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[1]Maxwell, op. cit., pp 120f. [2]Ibid, p. 130.

common use by the Word of Institution and the prayer of consecration. The Word of Institution was to be read from one of the Gospels, or from First Corinthians 11:23, to which reading the minister could add explanation and application. After sanctification of the elements by the Word and prayer, the minister, at the table, was then to break the bread and give it to the communicants, saying, "Take ye, eat ye; this is the body of Christ which is broken for you: do this in remembrance of him." Similarly, he gives them the cup, "This cup is the new testament of the blood of Christ, which is shed for the remission of sins of many: drink ye all of it." The minister then takes communion in both kinds and the congregation follow his motions. An exhortation to live a worthy life, a prayer of thanksgiving and for assistance in leading a worthy life, a metrical psalm, and the blessing conclude the service.[1]

In the Restoration Church there was little change in the form of the communion service. According to a description of a communion at Rattray in 1668 the following were the essentials of celebration in that parish. The service began with the reading of the Word and a sermon. After the sermon, the minister debarred all ignorant and unreconciled persons. He then went to the tables and "according to the words of institution, did consecrate the elements by prayer, and served the tables." After all had communed, the service was closed with exhortation and prayer.[2]

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[1] "Directory for Public Worship," pp. 152ff.

[2] Foster, op. cit., pp. 142f.

Private Communion.- Communion apart from the regular preaching service was forbidden by the General Assembly.[1] Although the Reformers had, before 1560, celebrated the sacrament in private houses, they appear to have been opposed to special communion for the sick, as a pastoral entity, from the outset. The thinking of the Reformers in this matter is clear and consistent with their understanding of the nature of the sacrament as an illustration accompanying the preached Word. Where there was no Word publicly preached, according to this doctrine, there could be no sacrament. In 1617, at the urging of the king, the General Assembly allowed private communion for the sick in cases of urgent necessity. In such cases, it was required that the recipient had been bedridden for at least a year and that the minister be accompanied by "six elders and other famous witnesses."[2] The following year, the Perth Assembly reduced both these requirements, but insisted that the full service for administration of the sacrament be used.[3] The Westminster Assembly prohibited the giving of communion elements to those who did not hear the preached Word, forbidding private masses and reservation of the consecrated elements.[4]

There is evidence of limited practice of private communion in Scotland before the Restoration. In 1615, the execution of the Earl of Orkney was postponed so that he could receive a special communion.[5] Aberdeen held a special communion

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[1]BUKS, p. 221 [2]Calderwood, op. cit., VII, p. 285.

[3]McMillan, op. cit., p. 285.

[4]Confession of Faith, xxix.4.

in 1592 for mariners setting sail, and again in 1604 for those who had been at sea during the regular celebration. In the 1630's, private communions seem to have been fairly common in Aberdeen.[1] McMillan gives several other examples of the holding of special communion services by direction of synods and presbyteries.[2] Foster maintains that at the Restoration provision was made for private communion, "at least in some areas." However, the only example offered is that of the Synod of Aberdeen which, in 1662, ordained that private communion was not to be denied by ministers and that in the event of plague the "minister is free to give it to the diseased persons."[3]

Although private communion seems to have been popular in Aberdeen throughout the seventeenth century, there is no evidence of its being demanded elsewhere by any large number of people or of its having wide acceptance by the ministry.

Baptism.-

Theory.- The greatest emphasis in the thought of the Scottish Church on Baptism was that it could be administered only in connection with the preaching of the Word. This, of course, was in agreement with the Reformed understanding of the sacraments as visual signs and seals of the promises of the Word. Little consideration was given in the earliest years of the Reformation to other aspects of baptism, except that the idea of baptismal regeneration was summarily rejected. ~~Too,~~ It was

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[1]McMillian, op. cit. p. 211.

[2]Calderwood,,op. cit., VII, pp 195f.

[3]Foster, op. cit, p. 141.

urged that water only be used as the element in baptism, to the exclusion of "oil, salt, wax, spittle, etc."[1] Because of the insistance that baptism be celebrated only as a part of a preaching service, the main body of the Church came into sharp conflict with James VI and those who supported his ecclesiastical policies over the demands of the king that baptism be given privately when requested because of the child's health. In order to understand the theological position from which the Church argued in this dispute, it will be necessary to refer briefly to Calvin's views on infant baptism and to state the Church's views on the nature of baptism.

Calvin on Infant Baptism.- For Calvin, baptism was the New Testament continuation of the Old Testament sacrament of circumcision.[2] By both signs the covenant was to be sealed to the children of the faithful. The benefits conveyed in baptism are that the parent is shown the infinite goodness of God who extends his grace and goodness not only to the parent but to his posterity also. Baptism further shows that the child baptised is ingrafted into the body of Christ, becoming the object of the special interest of all members of the Church.[3] Calvin warns those who neglect their duty in having their children baptised that God will take vengence on those who despise impressing the symbol of the covenant on their children.[4] The evil of failing to present a child for baptism was not that the salvation of the

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[1] BOD, ii.

[2] Institutes, IV.xvi.4.

[3] Ibid., IV.xvi.9.

[4] Ibid.

child could be jeopardised, but that by his contempt of baptism, the parent rejected the grace of God offered therein. The salvation of the child was unrelated to his being baptised. Calvin attacked the idea that the unbaptised die condemned. In answer to Servetus and the Anabaptists, who argued that children too young to understand the significance of the sacrament should not be baptised, Calvin countered that although the children are lost by nature, they are holy by supernatural grace, therefore fit to receive the sacrament. Salvation does not depend on baptism but upon hearing the Word. Since infants are too young to hear the Word, God feeds them on Christ, but in a way we do not understand.[1] In support of his argument, Calvin cites the example of the thief upon the cross, who was unable to partake of Christian sacraments, but was assured of salvation. Hell is not for the unbaptised, but for those who hear the Gospel and despise it.[2]

Scottish Views on Infant Baptism.- One of the reasons given by the Scots Reformers for insisting that baptism immediately follow the sermon of the regular worship service was "to remove this gross error by the which many deceived, think that children be damned if they die without Baptism." The Reformers allowed that baptism could be administered whenever the Word was preached, but hoped to show, by keeping baptisms to the regular services regardless of the health of individual infants, that the child's salvation was not dependent upon his baptism.[3]

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[1] Ibid., IV.xvi.31. [2] Ibid.

[3] BOD, ix.

The Westminster Assembly required that the infants of one or both believing parents, being within the covenant,[1] are to be baptised, as well as persons of mature years who profess faith in and obedience to Christ.[2] Although grace and salvation are not bound inseparably to baptism, refusing or neglecting baptism was considered a great sin since it amounted to refusing the promises of Christ. Following Calvin and in agreement with the Scottish Reformers, the Assembly rejected the idea of baptismal regeneration, stating that it was impossible to say either that no person can be regenerated or saved without baptism or that all who are baptised are undoubtedly regenerated.[3]

Children of believers should be baptised at the earliest possible opportunity, according to the Westminster standards, not to insure their salvation, but to instruct their parents and to ingraft the children into the body of Christ as members of the Church.[4] It was for this reason, as well as the orthodox understanding of the nature of baptism, that the Church of Scotland in the conflict with James VI over private baptism was unable to concede that baptism of children in ill health was an important part of pastoral care. It has been reported that on his visit to Scotland in 1617, James was contending with a minister who was against the private administration of baptism. The king's opponent asked him if he thought a child would be damned if it were to die unbaptised. "No," replied James, "but if you refuse to baptise a dying child you will."[5]

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[1] Larger Catechism, 166. [2] Confession of Faith, xxviii.iv.

[3] Ibid., xxviii.v. [4] Ibid, xxviii.1.

[5] McMillan, op. cit., p. 256.

Anderson, in maintaining that in seventeenth century Scotland baptism was considered the gateway to salvation and that only one fate was possible for the infant who died unbaptised seems to have ignored the teachings of the Church of Scotland on the subject. His statement that unbaptised children became, according to popular belief, the prized possessions of Satan seems more emphatic than the scant evidence will allow.[1]

Relationship to the Preached Word.- The Scottish Church recognized no baptism except that "annexed to God's Word" as a seal of the Word.[2] The Book of Common Order required that the infant to be baptised be brought to church "on the day appointed to Common Prayer and Preaching."[3] The Book of Discipline states that "baptism may be ministered whensoever the word is preached," specifying not only the sabbath and week-day worship services, but also the afternoon catechetical sessions as fit times for baptism.[4] The Westminster "Directory for Public Worship" prescribes that administration of the sacrament of baptism follow the regular preaching service.[5] The insistence of the Church that baptism was not a sacrament unless administered as part of a preaching service was the unresolved core of the conflict over baptism between the Church and James VI.

The Church intended that baptism be administered after sermon,[6] but it was the custom in some parishes to baptise be-

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[1] Op. cit., p. 87.

[2] BOD, ii.

[3] Cited by McMillan, op. cit., p. 257.

[4] ix.

[5] p. 149.

[6] Ibid.; BOD, ix.

fore sermon. The most obvious advantage of having baptism precede the sermon was noted by the session of Perth, which decided in 1587 that children to be baptised be kept out of church during the sermon since the din of crying infants kept others from hearing. Sunday baptisms were discouraged, also on practical grounds, in some parishes where baptisms were followed by considerable merrymaking. In 1581 and 1621 the Scottish Parliament passed acts against such Sabbath profanation, but the success of these acts is not apparent.[1]

The Baptismal Service.- Before the meeting of the Westminster Assembly, ministers were expected to administer baptism according to the form of the Book of Common Order. Considerable latitude in the service was allowed by the book and the practice of individual ministers varied.[2] Alexander Henderson, in the period between the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 and the Westminster Assembly, described the service of baptism as follows. The minister remained in the pulpit after sermon. The father or another godly man presented the child for baptism. The minister offered a short and pertinent prayer, then gave instruction concerning the authorship, nature, use, and end of the sacrament, and the duties required by baptism both of the person baptised and the sponsor. The sponsor then recited the Apostles' Creed, the sum of the faith into which the child was to be baptised, and promised to bring him up,in the faith confessed and in the fear of God. Then, the name of the child was told the minister

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[1]McMillan, op. cit., pp. 257ff. [2]Ibid., pp. 261 ff.

who administered the sacrament "by sprinkling with water "into the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." A prayer and blessing concluded the service.[1] Descriptions by other observers differ little from Henderson's account.[2] It must be pointed out that the accounts of Kirk and Morer were written during the second Episcopacy, but differ only in details from the rites described by Alexander Henderson.

The service prescribed by the Westminster Assembly began after the psalm which would normally close the regular preaching service, except for the blessing. The child was presented for baptism by the father or some Christian friend. The minister gave instruction on the institution, nature, use, and ends of baptism, not only for the benefit of the sponsor, but sought thereby to remedy the ignorance and errors of the congregation. He admonished all present to recall their own baptism and "to improve and make right use of their baptism, and of the covenant betwixt God and their souls." There followed an exhortation of the parent concerning the religious nurture of the child. Then, prayer was "also to be joined with the word of institution for sanctifying the water to this spiritual use." The minister is then told the name of the child and baptises it by pouring or sprinkling water on the face of the child, saying, calling the

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[1] Op. cit., pp. 18ff.

[2] E.g., Kirk's Tour, p. 19; Morer, Short Account, pp. 62f.; cf. Duncan Anderson, op. cit., pp. 87ff. and Foster, op. cit., p. 148.

child by name, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." A prayer of thanksgiving and the blessing, although the latter is not specified, concluded the service.[1]

Private Baptism.- Because baptism could not be administered except as part of the regular preaching service, it could not be properly administered except in church. It was expected that parents would present children for baptism in the church of their own parish.

In spite of the resolution of the Church, James VI was able to have the validity of private baptism recognized by the General Assembly. In 1602, the General Assembly, the king being present, enacted that "the sacrament of baptism be not refused to any infants if the parents crave the same, he giving a Christian confession of his faith." Specifically, baptism was not to be delayed until "certain particular days," meaning the days for Sabbath or week-day worship.[2] The king was not pleased with the action of the Assembly since too many safeguards had been placed for insuring that, although baptism was administered privately, it would continue to be annexed to the preaching of the Word. In 1616, the Assembly renewed the Act of 1602 and added the requirement that baptism be administered to all infants at the desire of the parents or any other church member who is ready to give a confession of his faith, "at any time betwixt sun-rising

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[1] "Directory for Public Worship," pp. 129ff.

[2] BUKS, p. 527.

and down-passing not delaying the same to the time of preaching or prayers." In 1618, the Perth Assembly allowed baptism to be administered in case of emergency when required, provided that the same form be used as if the sacrament were administered in the congregation. About the same time, John Forbes of Corse, supported the private administration of baptism but insisted that it "must be combined with public teaching, or with such teaching as is virtually public." Attention should be drawn to the provision made by the Perth Assembly that following a private baptism, public intimation was to be made in the church on the Sabbath following in order that the infant could be received "as one of the true flock of Christ's fold."[1] The Assembly thus reaffirmed the concept that one of the purposes of baptism is to ingraft the recipient into the body of Christ as a member of the visible Church.

Like the other Perth Articles and the Liturgy of 1637, private baptism had little popular support. The practice was forbidden by the Glasgow Assembly of 1638. The Westminster Assembly required that baptism be administered only at public worship services.[2] Foster makes no mention of private baptism during the second Episcopacy, except for a minute of the session of Elgin.[3] Indeed the evidence implies that public baptism was customary.[4]

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[1]McMillan, op. cit., pp. 255f. [2]pp. 149ff.

[3]Records of Elgin,(2 vols.; Aberdeen: Spalding Club, 1908, II, p. 302.

[4]Foster, op. cit., pp. 147f.

Solemnization of Matrimony

Scottish Marriage Law.- The understanding of what was believed by the Church to take place, ecclesiastically and civilly, in the marriage ceremonies of seventeenth century Scotland requires mention of the marriage laws then in effect. In solemnizing matrimony the minister did not perform, from a legal standpoint, a marriage. Based on Roman precedent, Scottish law held that marriage consisted in the consent of the parties.[1] The process of marriage, as understood by the seventeenth century Church of Scotland was, in order, promise of matrimony, publication of banns, solemnization of the bond by the Church, and consummation of the marriage. Consummation of the marriage before solemnization would not make the marriage void, but would bring charges of fornication against the couple and disciplinary proceedings in the church courts.[2] In solemnizing marriage, it was not the purpose of the Church to perform marriage in the sense of enactment but to declare the divine nature of the estate of matrimony and to pronounce a blessing upon those who enter therein according to divine, that is, ecclesiastical, law.[3] In this connection, it has been pointed out that an unexpected feature of the marriage ceremony of the Book of Common Order is the failure to provide an occasion for the minister to declare the couple married.[4] The omission may be attributed to Scottish marriage law,

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[1] Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p. 873.

[2] BOD, ix.

[3] II BOD, iv.12.

[4] McMillan, op. cit., p. 267.

mentioned above, which provides that consent rather than ceremony makes marriage.

The Interest of the Church in Marriage.- In the Book of Discipline, the Scottish Reformers discussed marriage at some length, but more than anything else expressed concern about the evils which had beset the institution of marriage as administered by the Roman Church. They maintained that, at best, marriage was insecure since prelates could dissolve it at will. They sought, too, to prevent clandestine marriages, especially of those still in the care of parents or other guardians. The giving of children in marriage without the consent of the children was spoken against. For adultery, which they described as widely practised, they sought the punishment of death. The emphasis at the time of the Reformation was on the correction of existing abuses, rather than application of positive good.[1]

The positive pastoral interest of the early Scottish Church in the solemnization of marriage must be assumed or inferred from the content of the rite prescribed by the Book of Common Order. The positive value of the solemnization of marriage is implied by the conviction of the Church that "all relations are sanctified by the word and prayer."[2] Since the minister alone was empowered to dispense the Word, the Church may be said to exercise pastoral care in the solemnization of marriage not through grace conferred by a sacrament, but by the ministry of the Word.

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[1]BOD, ix. [2]McMillan, op. cit, pp. 266f.

The Relationship to the Preached Word.- The Church of Scotland, following Calvin,[1] denied that marriage could be a sacrament,[2] but intended that, like the sacraments, marriage should be annexed to the preaching of the Word.[3] It was required that the marriage ceremony be performed "Sunday before sermon."[4] In 1581, the Church's resolution that marriages could not take place apart from preaching services was restated by the General Assembly.[5] In the ecclesiastical struggles of the seventeenth century all parties insisted that marriage be performed as part of the public worship. Although some Episcopal leaders strongly advocated private administration of the sacraments, authorization of private marriage ceremonies was never sought.[6] The reason for this uniform desire for public solemnization of marriage on the part of all parties within the Church is found in the desire of the Reformers to prevent improper marriages under cover of secrecy. To prevent clandestine marriages, public announcement of banns and public solemnization were considered mandatory.

In spite of the Church's original intentions, the design of requiring the celebration of marriage before Sunday morning sermon was soon frustrated. As early as 1579, the General Assembly allowed the ceremony to take place at week-day preaching services attended by a sufficient number of witnesses.[7] Again

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[1] Institutes, IV.xix.34.

[2] BOD, ii.

[3] McMillan, op. cit., p. 272.

[4] BOD, ix.

[5] BUKS, p. 221.

[6] Cf. McMillan, op. cit., p. 270, where the phenomenon is pointed out, but no explanation offered.

[7] BUKS, p. 192.

in 1602, the Assembly decreed that the band of matrimony could be celebrated on the Sabbath or any other preaching day, according to the wishes of the couple.[1] Calderwood hints that at this Assembly there was considerable opposition to allowing marriage ceremonies to take place on Sunday. In the matter of Sunday marriage services, the Church was faced with the problem of wild or lavish festivities following the ceremonies and did not lament the separation of marriage ceremonies and the Sabbath.[2] The problem of revelry following Sunday marriages seems to have been widespread. In 1570, the kirk session of St. Andrews sought to halt the violation of the Sabbath by wedding parties which ran about the town "in minstrelry and harlotry."[3] In 1586, the Perth session required that Sunday marriages be celebrated in the afternoon, thereby reducing the time available for festivities,[4] and six years later altogether forbade Sunday marriage.[5] After trying in 1603 and 1626 to prevent the excesses that followed Sunday marriages, the session at Elgin in 1630 abolished Sunday marriage ceremonies.[6] In 1641, the session of Glasgow ruled "that no marriage be granted, upon any pretext whatsoever, upon Sunday, at any time after this." The act was renewed in

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[1]Calderwood, History, VI, p. 183.

[2]McMillan, op. cit., pp. 272ff.

[3]Register of...St. Andrews, p. 341.

[4]Spottiswood Miscellany, II, p. 253.

[5]Ecclesiastical Annals of Perth, p. 115.

[6]Records of Elgin, II, pp. 104, 193.

1646 and 1648.[1] Nevertheless, in spite of all the efforts of the Church, Sunday weddings remained popular.[2]

The Marriage Ceremony.-

The Early Church of Scotland.- The wedding rites of the early Church of Scotland were patterned after those of the Genevan Church.[3] The Scots ceremony, intended immediately to precede the sermon at a regular worship service, began with an exhortation derived from the Book of Common Prayer.[4] The couple and the congregation were then asked if they knew of any impediment to the marriage. If no impediment was alleged, the man was asked if he would take the woman for his wife. He was expected to answer, "Even so I take her before God and in the presence of this His congregation." A similar question was put to the woman. If a similar answer was received, the minister directed the couple to hear the "Gospel that ye may understand how our Lord would have this holy contract kept and observed and how sure and fast a knot it is which may in no wise be loosed." If the couple believed the words read they could be certain, the minister declared, that God had knit them together in the holy estate of wedlock. He further explained that God's Word required them "to live together in godly love, in Christian peace, and good example." The minister blessed the couple and the ceremony was concluded with the singing of the one hundred twenty-eighth psalm or an alternative.[5]

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[1]Wodrow, MS "Biography," III, p. 18.

[2]McMillan, op. cit., p. 274.

[3]BUKS, p. 13.

[4]McMillan, op. cit., p. 266.

[5]Ibid., pp. 266f.

The Westminster Assembly.- The ceremony prescribed by the Westminster Assembly began with a prayer that expressed the conviction that man, because of his sin, is "less than the least of the mercies of God," but since God had by His providence brought together the couple to be married, He was entreated to accept them in Christ and to give them grace to live in the married estate "as becometh Christians." The language of the prayer reflects the three theological assumptions basic to the pastoral care of the period, viz., that man of himself is without strength or value and deserves to be the object of God's wrath, that in Christ and through faith in Him man is regenerated, and that through grace conferred with regeneration, man is able to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. After the prayer, the minister was to declare out of the scripture "the institution, use and ends of Marriage" together with the duties of the married estate, "exhorting [the couple] to study the holy word of God" that they may make their marriage an institution of love and good works. After enquiry into impediment to the contract, the minister directed the man to take the woman by the right hand and say, "I N. do take thee N. to be my married wife, and do, in the presence of God, and before this congregation, promise and covenant to be a loving and faithful husband unto thee, until God shall separate us by death." The woman made a similar vow and the minister without any further ceremony pronounced them to be husband and wife according to God's ordinance. The ceremony was concluded with the blessing.[1]

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[1] "Directory for Public Worship," pp. 156ff.

The Responsibility of the Minister.- The early Scottish Church gave no clear statement of its understanding of the role of the minister in the solemnization of marriage. The Book of Common Order seems to assume that the minister will perform the ceremony.[1] The Book of Discipline makes no mention of who shall be responsible for the ceremony.[2] McMillan interprets this omission to mean that marriage by readers may have been tolerated by the Reformation Church.[3] Support for McMillan's theory is given by the action of the General Assembly in 1597, when, in an attempt to prevent baptism of illegitimate children and solemnization of clandestine marriages by readers, allowed readers to perform marriage ceremonies under the supervision of the minister of the parish or, in parishes without ministers, the presbytery. At the same time, the Assembly prohibited baptism by readers.[4] From this, it may be concluded that, at the turn of the century, the Church, while restricting preaching of the Word and administration of the sacraments to the ministry, was not so strict about the solemnization of marriage, allowing readers to perform the rites of marriage.

The Second Book of Discipline included in the responsibilities of the minister, the office of reader being banned by this document, the solemnization of "the contract of marriage betwixt them that are joined therein."[5] Until the time of the

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[1] McMillan, op. cit., p. 266.

[2] ix.

[3] Op. cit., pp. 277f.

[4] BUKS, p. 460.

[5] iv.12.

Westminster Assembly, most marriages were performed by ministers who because of their office were able "to pronounce the blessing of God on them that enter in the holy band in the fear of the Lord."[1] There were, however, some examples of readers in the first half of the seventeenth century being authorized to perform marriages, as at Elgin in 1626.[2]

It was not until the adoption of the Westminster standards that the Church of Scotland had a full statement of the positive values for pastoral care implicit in the solemnization of marriage. The "Directory for Public Worship" thus described the interest of the Church and the responsibility of the minister in marriage:

> Although Marriage be no Sacrament, nor peculiar to the Church of God, but common to Mankind, and of public interest in every Commonwealth; yet because such as marry are to marry in the Lord, and have special need of Instruction, Direction, and Exhortation, from the Word of God, at this entering into such a new Condition; and of the blessing of God upon them therein, we judge it expedient that marriage be solemnized by a lawful minister of the word, that he may accordingly counsel them, and pray for a blessing upon them.[3]

The minister's responsibility in connection with marriage was essentially an extension of his responsibility for preaching. In preaching, the minister was to proclaim the Word of God in the place and with the authority of Christ. In the solemnization of matrimony, he was to direct the Word proclaimed to the instruction, direction, and exhortation of those being united in marriage.

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Records of Elgin, II, p. 193.

[3] P. 156.

Burial of the Dead

Theory.- The early Church of Scotland viewed the ceremonies practiced before the Reformation in connection with burial of the dead as occasions of superstitious and ostentatious display. The Reformers sought not only to correct existing ecclesiastical and special abuses associated with death but to make burial an occasion for pastoral care. Christian burial, said the Book of Discipline, signified that the body committed to the earth would not perish, but would rise again. In order that burial practices would not be more of a liability than an asset, "superstition, idolatry, and whatsoever have proceeded of a false opinion, and for advantage sake" was to be avoided. No reading or singing was to be allowed at burials. Although such observances might help some of those present to prepare themselves for death, the ignorant were certain to think that the works of the living were for the profit of the dead. Specific Roman funeral rites forbidden were Mass, Placebo, and Dirige, the latter two being popular names given services in the office of the dead,[1] together with "all other prayers over or for the dead." Such funeral practices constituted idolatry, since it is plain from the scriptures, the Church argued, that those who die in the faith of Christ Jesus go to life everlasting, while upon all others rests the wrath of God. The procedure considered most suitable for burial was thus described by the Book of Discipline:

> And therefore, we think most expedient that the Dead be convoyed to the place of burial with some honest company of the Church, without either singing or reading;

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[1]McMillan, op. cit., p. 294.

> yea, without all kind of ceremony heretofore used, other than that the dead be committed to the grave, with such gravity and sobriety, as those that be present may seem to fear the judgments of God, and to hate sin, which is the cause of death.[1]

Sermons, like ceremonies, at burials were condemned. Although a sermon or reading of the scripture might serve to warn the living that they, too, must die, a special sermon at burial could serve no useful purpose. This message, it was felt, would be regularly expressed in the sermons daily preached in the parish. If men would not hear this message frequently stated from the pulpit, they would be unlikely to hear it given from the graveside. Funeral sermons, the Reformers insisted, would nourish superstition rather than cause anyone to consider his own estate. Fear was expressed, too, that ministers might be led to betray their calling through funeral sermons, making distinctions between their parishioners on material grounds. The minister would be tempted to preach at the burial of the rich and honorable and keep silence "when the poor or despised departeth." Another argument against funeral sermons was that the minister would spend most of his time preaching at burials.[2]

From the standpoint of pastoral care, attention must be called to the absence of comfort in the attitude of the Scottish Reformers toward burial ceremonies and funeral sermons. In their statements on the positive values of funeral celebrations, the Reformers mention only that such services may serve as warnings to the living of their own inevitable doom, but that obsequies might be of comfort to the bereft has no part in their un-

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[1]Knox, Works, II, p. 50. [2]Ibid.

derstanding of the role of the Church at burials. The fact that Christian burial presupposes Christian resurrection[1] is the only element of consolation to be found in the thought on burial of the early Church of Scotland. It was the duty of the minister to comfort his people in times of affliction,[2] but for reasons not apparent from the evidence, the Church seems to have felt that this duty to those who mourn could be better discharged apart from the actual burial of the dead.

Burial Practices.

Sixteen Century Scotland.- In spite of its reasoning against funeral observances, the Scottish Reformation made allowances for the use both of ceremonies and sermons by those congregations willing to justify their actions before God and the General Assembly. An addition to the Book of Discipline provided that although the Church was opposed to the use of ceremonies at burials, particular churches might use them, "with the consent of the ministry of the same, as they will answer to God, and Assembly of the Universal Kirk gathered within the realm.[3] As for funeral sermons, the Book of Common Order suggested the possibility of the inclusion of a sermon in its order for burial:

> The corpse is reverently brought to the grave, accompanied with the congregation, without any further ceremonies: which being buried, the Minister if he be present, and required, goeth to the Church, if it be not far off, and maketh some comfortable exhortation to the people, touching death and resurrection.[4]

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[1] Ibid., II, p. 249.

[2] II BOD, ii.5.

[3] Knox, Works, II, pp. 250f.

[4] Ibid., VI, p. 333.

The use of funeral services was comparatively rare in sixteenth century Scotland, but two example deserves attention. In spite of the expressed wishes of the Church, John Knox did not hesitate, in 1570, to preach the funeral sermon of the Regent Moray, offering at the service a prayer of thanksgiving for the faithful departed.[1] An example of a burial ceremony drafted for the use of an individual congregation is the "Form and Manner of Burial" used by the Church of Montrose. The rubric is taken from the Book of Common Order and directs that the body be taken to the graveside, accompanied by the congregation, where the rites were to be performed. After the arrival at the graveside the service began with an exhortation by the minister or reader. A prayer, based on the Book of Common Prayer (1552) and the singing of a vernacular hymn completed the service.[2]

In contrast with these examples and more in the spirit of the Book of Discipline is the part played by the Church in the burial of the Earl of Atholl in 1579. The Earl's body was lying in St. Giles' Church during the meeting of the General Assembly. The Assembly sent John Row and John Durie to investigate rumors that the body was covered with a mortcloth embroidered with a white cross and that the attendants were robed in long gowns with hoods and bearing torches. No torches were found, but the Assembly decided that the cross and hoods were superstitious and heathen practices. Another commission, also including

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[1]Calderwood, History, II, pp. 513ff.; Cf. McMillan, op. cit., p. 284.

[2]"The Forme and Maner of Buriall Used in the Kirk of Montrois," Wodrow, Miscellancy, pp. 293ff.; Cf. McMillan, op. cit., p. 45.

Durie, was sent to "the Lords" responsible for the burial, directing them to cover the body with plain black velvet and to remove the hoods from the attendants' gowns.[1] There is no other record of the involvement of the Church or ministry in the burial. The role of Durie is especially interesting. One of the ministers of St. Giles,' he seems to have had no responsibility for and, before being sent by the Assembly, little information about the burial.

Seventeenth Century Scotland.- With the introduction of Episcopacy early in the seventeenth century, funeral observances became more popular in the Church of Scotland with both Episcopal and Presbyterian parties. Patrick Simpson of Stirling, a staunch Presbyterian was buried in 1618 after a sermon by Henry Livingstone, on 2 Timothy 4:7. That night, Simpson's brother Archibald, minister of Dalkeith, preached a sermon on his brother's death in a private house to a select congregation.[2] When the Earl of Dunfermline was buried in Dalgety Church in 1622, his coffin was placed in front of the pulpit until "an excellent sermon" was preached by Archbishop Spottiswood.[3] At the funeral of the Marquis of Hamilton in 1625, Archbishop Law of Glasgow preached.[4] The account of the burial of the Earl of Buccleugh at Hawick in 1634 related that after the funeral sermon "the

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[1]BUKS, p. 187.

[2]Scots Worthies, p. 115.

[3]Memoir of Chancellor Seton, p. 144, cited by McMillan, op. cit., p. 285.

[4]James Balfour, "Register of Interments and Funeralls since 1620," NLS, Advocates MSS, 33.2.11.

Corpse were interred amongst his ancestors."[1] In 1635 the Earl of Kinnoul was buried in Kinnoul Church after a sermon by James Fowler, minister of Kinfouns.[2] All these accounts seem to support McMillan's belief that the funeral sermon was usually the only religious observance used at Scottish burials during the first Episcopacy.[3] The funeral sermons preached after the death of Patrick Forbes, bishop of Aberdeen, in 1635, deserve special mention. Not only was a sermon preached at the actual interment, but additional funeral sermons were preached in the cathedral on subsequent Sundays and many ministers of the diocese preached "funerals" in his memory in their own parishes. The sermon at Forbes' burial was preached by Robert Baron, one of the Aberdeen Doctors, and contains a rather vivid metaphor. "Having gone through my text," Baron said as he finished the expository portion of his sermon, "I now apply my self, and my text both, to this present text, which lieth before us," viz., Bishop Forbes' body.[4]

In the accounts of the burials of the Laird of Drum,[5] the Countess of Wigtown,[6] and the Countess of Nithsdale,[7] all in the 1630's, there is no mention of sermon. In the case of the Countess of Wigtown, the Book of Common Order seems to have been

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

[3] Op. cit., p. 285.

[4] Funerals of a Right Reverend Father in God Patrick Forbes, Bishop of Aberdeen, Aberdeen: Edward Rabon, 1635, p. 51.

[5] Records of Old Aberdeen, I, p. 27.

[6] Balfour, op. cit. [7] Ibid.

followed explicitly. The body was convoyed by a procession from St. Giles' to the Church of Holyrood House where she was interred. There is no mention of other ceremony.

The Scottish Reformers feared that the use of ceremony at burials would give rise to superstition and ostentation. The use of sermons, they predicted, would lead the minister to preach at the burial of the rich and powerful and to keep silence at the death of the poor. The funeral practices of the seventeenth century before 1638 showed that their fears were not unjustified. Burials during this period were characterized by as much pomp and display as the mourners could afford. The burial of the Earl of Montrose in 1609, for example, cost 40,000 merks,[1] while expenses for the burial of the Earl of Kinnoul in 1635 exceeded 2600 pounds.[2] Other burials were only slightly less pretentious.[3] It is refreshing to note in this period of material excess at funerals that in July 1631 the Earl of Errol asked that the money he expected to be spent on his burial be given to the poor.[4]

In the case of funeral sermons, it would appear from the records that, as foreseen by the Reformers, the rich and the powerful, both in Church and state, were honored by funeral sermons, while there is no record of such obsequies being performed for the poor. In 1638, the General Assembly banned funeral ser-

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[1]Calderwood, History, VII, p. 38.

[2]Balfour, op. cit. [3]Cf. Chambers, op. cit., p. 74.

[4]John Spalding, The History of the Troubles and Memorable Transactions in Scotland and England (2 vols.; Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1828, I, p. 11.

vices.[1] The preaching of funeral sermons in Scotland seems to have died out after this.[2] The Westminster Assembly forbade all attendant ceremony at burial. The description of the procedure to be followed by the Church is almost identical with the provisions of the Book of Common Order.

> When any person departeth this life, let the dead body, upon the day of burial, be decently attended from the house to the place appointed for public burial, and there immediately interred, without any ceremony.[3]

Specific funeral practices condemned by the Westminster Assembly were praying, reading, and singing, either en route to the grave or at the graveside. These ceremonies had been grossly abused, it was said, and not only did no good for the dead but also harmed the living. However, the directory for burial of the dead was so phrased that no minister, if present at a burial, would be inhibited from giving some appropriate word of exhortation.[4] In the debates over the drafting of the policy on burial, Charles Herle, an English parish minister, denied that the minister had any responsibility in connection with burial,[5] insisting that such an extension of the pastoral office would be a burden to the minister. He cited as an analogy, the refusal of the Disciples to serve ~~at~~ tables.[6] When it was suggested that

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[1]Peterkin, Records, p. 47. [2]McMillan, op. cit., p. 286.

[3]"Directory for Public Worship," p. 162.

[4]Alexander F, Mitchell and John Struthers, (eds.), Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1874, p. 16.

[5]Cf. Thomas Cartwright, "The care of burying the dead does not belong more to the ministerial office than to the rest of the Church," cited by McMillan, op. cit., p. 286.

[6]Mitchell and Struthers, op. cit., p. 13.

the minister might be allowed to offer an exhortation, he expressed the fear that if the minister were required to give exhortation at burials, a full service of worship would soon be required.[1] In the Westminster Assembly were those who understood a broader significance of the minister's presence at the graveside. Jeremiah Whitaker of Streton reasoned, "I think that a minister stands in a general relation to his people...to be sensible of the death of his people is his duty."[2] ~~Too,~~ Thomas Hill argued that Christians ought not to meet except as Christians, implying that the minister should attend a burial only as the pastor of his flock and not without definite responsibility.[3] The latter group of men saw that in every relationship with his parishioners the minister's task is pastoral care and that burial was an opportunity for the ministering of the Word of God. The Westminster Assembly did not assign to the minister a definite responsibility in connection with burial, but in its standards allowed the minister to remain silent or to preach as his conscience dictated. Thus, in their resolution of the debate over the minister's responsibility for burial, the Assembly of Divines followed the same path as the Scots Reformers, who denounced the same practices that the Westminster Assembly objected to, but were "not so precise" as to forbid them altogether. The Assembly distinguished between ecclesiastical and civil obsequies. Their views against participation of the Church in fu-

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[1] Ibid., p. 14. [2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 15

neral ceremonies should not be interpreted, they said, to mean that they objected to "any civil respects or deferences at the burial, suitable to the rank and condition of the party deceased while he was living."[1]

There is scant evidence of ministerial participation in Scottish funeral services during the interregnum. A minute in the session records of Dalgety parish, Fife, would indicate, for example, that when the Laird of Fordell was buried in 1650 neither the minister nor any other member of the session was present, although the deceased was one of the heritors of the parish.[2] This is not surprising in view of the assertion made in 1664, that no funeral sermon had been preached in Fife since 1640 or earlier.[3] An exception is found in the funeral sermon of James Durham, preached in 1658 by his colleague in the Glasgow Cathedral, John Carstairs. The text was Isaiah 62:1f., "The righteous perisheth and no man layeth it to heart."[3]

After the Restoration, funeral observances regained some popularity, but ecclesiastical solemnities were not pressed into immediate use at the Restoration. It is interesting to see that at the reburial of the first Marquis of Montrose no religious observance was included in the undertaking. So far as the standards of the Church were concerned, the burial could be considered to have followed the provisions of the Book of Common Order or, for that matter, the Westminster "Directory for Public

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[1]William Ross, Glimpses of Pastoral Work in the Covenanting Times, London: James Nisbet, 1877, p.

[2]Chambers, op. cit., II, p. 299.

[3]Scots Worthies, p. 267.

Worship," since "the most extraordinary burial ever witnessed in the Capital of Scotland"[1] was accompanied by "civil respects or deferences" only. On January 7, 1661 a great company, led by the Chancellor, Parliament, and the clan Graham went to where Montrose's trunk lay buried on Boroughmuir. The remains were exhumed, placed in a casket and covered with a canopy and mort-cloth, then taken through the city to Holyrood Abbey. The body lay in state for four days, then was taken in splendor comparable to the coronation of Charles I, through files of soldiers over the very spot where he was executed, into the church of St. Giles, where final interment took place.[2] A popular account maintains that the ministers kept out of sight during the pageant, but it is unlikely that those who sought the favor of the crown, such as James Sharp who had taken residence in Holyrood House as chaplain to the chancellor only a few days earlier, would have been absent from the celebrations. Nevertheless, in no account of the proceedings is there any mention of any religious ceremony during the four day spectacle.

As funeral sermons became more popular, they were used by both Presbyterian and Episcopal parties in the Church, repeating the experience of the Church in the earlier part of the century. On the Presbyterian side, for example, after the death

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[1]Hewison, op. cit., II, p. 78.

[2]"Description of the Funeral of James, First Marquis of Montrose in 'Mercurias Caledonius,'" Clarendon Historical Society's Reprints, Series I, pp. 14ff.; John Nicoll, A Diary of the Public Transactions and other Occurances, Chiefly in Scotland, from January 1650 to June 1667, Edinburgh: Bannatine Club, 1836, p. 300; Baillie, Letters and Journals, III, p. 466.

of Richard Cameron in 1680, Donald Cargill preached his funeral at a conventicle in Shotts on the text, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"[1] On the Episcopal side, it is minuted that in February 1682, John Burnet, minister at Monymusk "preached a funeral upon Patrick [Scougal] Bishop of Abd."[2] In 1663, Archbishop Fairfoul of Glasgow was buried in Edinburgh at a service recorded by Nicoll. A large congregation attended the service, but Nicoll judged that the people came to see the ceremonies rather than to hear the preacher. At four in the afternoon, the town bell rang to convene the people for the service. The corpse was placed on a board in front of the pulpit and covered with a mortcloth. The entire ceremony consisted of the sermon only, after which the corpse was placed in a cart and, preceded be four trumpeters, convoyed from the New Kirk of Edinburgh to Holyrood Abbey where it was interred.[3] In 1684, the Presbytery of Inverness sought the advice of their bishop on the preaching of funerals, apparently a common practice in their limits. They related that they had been asked to preach funeral sermons at the burial of persons "who left no monument of their charity to the poor, or other necessary works, notwithstanding of their ability." They wondered, therefore, "whether or no such persons should have the honor of a funeral sermon."[4]

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[1] D. Hay Fleming, Six Saints of the Covenant (2 vols., London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1901, I, pp. 230f.

[2] Records of Old Aberdeen, II, p. 76.

[3] John Nicoll, Diary, Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1836, pp. 403f.

[4] Wm. Mackay (ed.), Records of the Presbyteries of Inverness and Dingwall, Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1896, p. 118.

On the other hand, there is evidence that many burials during the period of the second Episcopacy were performed without any attendant rites. The description given by Morer of Scottish burial is in agreement with the form prescribed by the Book of Common Order. The coffin, he explained, was covered with a pall sprinkled with flowers. The corpse was taken to the grave and interred with little ceremony, after which the mourners immediately returned home.[1]

When Alexander Brodie of Brodie died, his son recorded in detail the preparations for the burial. However, the only mention of religion on the day of burial, March 5, 1680, is, "We worshipped God together in the family this morning." He indicated that the Covenanting ministers, Thomas Hogg, James Urquhart, and Alexander Dunbar were present with the family during the period of bereavement, and it may be assumed that one or more of these ministers conducted the family worship to which Brodie referred. Although the presence of the ministers with the family is mentioned there is no indication of any ministerial participation in the burial.[2] Other eye-witness accounts provide further evidence that burials during this period were often conducted without religious ceremony. For example, the burial of the Lady Duffus in 1678 seems to have been altogether without ceremony. Brodie described it as lacking "that sense and tenderness which she deserved."[3] Of the burial of Lady Kilrack in 1676 it

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[1]Thomas Morer, A Short Account of Scotland, London: J. Morphew, 1715, pp. 66ff.

[2]Op. cit., p. 420.

[3]Ibid., p. 385.

was recorded only that her interment was accomplished with "peace and quietness and confluence of people."[1] Lamont described the case of David Younge who died in a fall from his horse and was buried without ceremony "at the Weymes...being the next parish to the place of the dead."[2] At the burial of John Welwood of Perth at Dron, in 1679, it was said that Mr. Petkorn, the parish minister of Dron, "resisted them that would bury him in his kirkyard."[3] At none of the above described burials is there any mention of ministerial participation or of other religious observances. A further indication of the rarity of funeral sermons in some parts of the country during the second Episcopacy is given by the surprise with which Brodie reports a rumour of a "funeral" preached near his parish.[4]

Two reactions to the English burial rites, compared by McMillan,[5] give differing estimates of the public opinion of Scottish burial customs toward the close of the seventeenth century. The first is that related by Morer, who as an English army chaplain conducted at Dunbar the funeral of an officer of the regiment to which he was attached. He memorized the Anglican burial service and conducted the graveside service by heart. The inhabitants of Dunbar were, he reported, favorably impressed and declared that "they could not forbear calling it a Christian

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[1] Ibid., p. 354.

[2] John Lamont, The Chronicle of Fife Being the Diary of John Lamont of Newton (1649-1672), Edinburgh: Archibald Constable, 1810, p. 95.

[3] Brodie, op. cit., p. 399.

[4] Ibid., p. 374.

[5] Op. cit., p. 293.

burial and said that theirs was like the burial of a dog" by comparison.[1] Wodrow, whose testimony is received sceptically by McMillan, related that in 1711 a near riot followed the reading of the Anglican burial service by a clergyman in canonicals, Episcopalians and Presbyterians alike objecting to the practice as popish.[2]

Summary.- In the seventeenth century Church of Scotland, the responsibility of the minister in connection with burial of the dead was never precisely defined. Because of superstition and material considerations on the part of those attending burials the Reformers and the Westminster Divines both considered that the ends of pastoral care would be better served if the minister had no part in burial procedures. However, the use of religious ceremonies and funeral sermons enjoyed some popularity during the century. It was, however, as recently as the middle of the nineteenth century before it was customary in some parts of Scotland for the minister to be present at burials.[3]

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[1] Op. cit., p. 68.

[2] Analecta, II, p. 30.

[3] McMillan, op. cit., 286.

CHAPTER V

THE PRIVATE MINISTRY OF THE WORD: PART I

CHAPTER V

THE PRIVATE MINISTRY OF THE WORD: PART I

General

Although the Reformed Church considered the most significant means of pastoral care to be preaching of the Word, the Church of Scotland did not limit the ministry of the Word to the services of public worship. Robert Leighton pointed out, in a sermon, the limitations of the formally preached Word. Leighton had a feeble, high-pitched voice that was difficult to hear at a distance from the pulpit. He was afraid, he said, that his broken voice would not reach the limits of the sanctuary and that many of the congregation would not hear - "especially of those that are not willing to hear." Of greater concern to Leighton was his observation that "many times they that do hear, do not hear really." Although an individual might hear the Word of God expounded from the pulpit, it did not follow that his life would reflect the doctrine he had heard and understood. "It is sad," he said, "to consider how little is done by the public worship of God, and by this ordinance of preaching in the way we use it."[1] Preaching alone, Leighton observed, was inadequate for the effectual calling of the elect. If, therefore, the Church was to accomplish its pastoral mission, it was necessary that

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[1]Works, VII, p. 53.

the public ministry of the Word be supplemented by the private ministry of the Word. The task of the minister, as understood by the seventeenth century Scottish Church, was the continual teaching of the Word, not only from the pulpit, but also from house to house, whenever and wherever the opportunity occured.[1] Eye-witness and first person accounts of this type of ministerial work are rare.[2] The scarcity of materials for a study of the private labors of the ministry during the seventeenth century is indicated by Ross when, in his study of the pastoral care practiced in Dalgety parish in the middle of the seventeenth century, he states that although the minister must have visited and counselled, no record remains of his private ministry.[3]

In this chapter, the private ministry of the Word in "face to face" situations, especially visitation and counselling, will be examined. The chapter following will describe the private ministry of the Word through pastoral letters.

Parochial Visitation

An Occasion for Preaching.- The responsibility of the minister to visit his parishioners in their homes, "upon all seasonable occasions, so far as his time, strength, and personal safety will permit,"[4] was in the main, in seventeenth century Scotland,

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[1] II BOD, iv.7.

[2] Scots Worthies and Wodrow's Analecta, although indicative of popular beliefs about ministerial labors of the seventeenth century, must be regarded as secondary evidence.

[3] Op. cit., p. 142; Ross is mainly concerned with the work recorded in the session minutes.

[4] Westminster "Directory for Public Worship," p. 159.

an opportunity for ministering the Word in private. In the Reformed Church, the necessity for visitation had been grounded in the scriptural requirement that the Word be preached not only publicly, but also from house to house.[1] Throughout the period of study, the principal purpose of pastoral visitation was affirmed to be the affording of an opportunity for the preaching of the Word, although other ministerial duties, such as instruction in the performance of family worship, might be discharged through pastoral visitation. Writers of the century, both Presbyterian and Episcopal, are uniform in their description of visitation as a type of preaching the Word in private.[2]

Except for the attendance of ministers in times of sickness and at the approach of death, there is little evidence with which to reconstruct a "typical" visit of a seventeenth century Scottish minister in the home of a parishioner. The conscious efforts of the writers of the century were absorbed elsewhere, making rare the type of literature which would recall the details of non-controversial spiritual concerns.[3] It is clear, however, that the Church intended ministerial visitation to be, more than anything else, preaching in the home. Such evidence as may be found indicates, in general, that practice supported

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[1]Acts 20:20; Calvin, Institutes, IV.i.22; II BOD, iv.7.

[2]John Forbes of Corse, De Cura et Residentia de Pastorali, ix.2; James Guthrie, A Treatise of Ruling Elders and Deacons, Edinburgh: Heir of Andrew Anderson, 1699, pp. 53f.; Westminster "Directory for Public Worship," loc cit.; and Henry Scougal, Works of the Rev. Henry Scougal, A.M., Glasgow: William Collins, 1830, pp. 210f.

[3]Cf. G. D. Henderson, Religious Life, p. 158.

the intention. For example, Robert Blair once preached, in the course of a pastoral visit, the sermon of the previous Sunday, "in way of conference."[1] Proclamation of the Word is the characteristic of the ministerial visits recorded by the Lairds of Brodie.[2] When Thomas Hogg of Kiltearn visited the family of James Urquhart when the latter was seriously ill[3] and the Brodie family after the death of Alexander Brodie,[4] he sympathized with the families, but his sympathies were given in the form of authoritative pronouncements. Although it would appear from the Brodies' reports that Hogg was rather more possessed of authority than of sympathy, his reputation was otherwise. He has been described as being deeply concerned for and sympathetic with the people of his parish. According to Scots Worthies, when Hogg was installed at Kiltearn, he found the people very ignorant as a result of the long neglect of the ministerial function in the parish. Hogg visited from house to house, "prayed with, exhorted and instructed them in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.[5] Brodie described a visit of William Falconer, the Episcopal incumbent of the parish as filled with "deadness, formality, unliveliness." His description should not be considered an attack on the Episcopal clergy, since he explained that he could not distinguish between Episcopal and Presbyterian visitation. While visiting, Falconer catechised, prayed, and preached

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[1] Life, p. 54.
[2] Op. cit., pp. 358, 359, 378, 420.
[3] Ibid., p. 358.
[4] Ibid., p. 420.
[5] Scots Worthies, p. 673.

to the woman upon whom he called.[1]

A Source of Information for Other Types of Pastoral Care.- In addition to providing an occasion for preaching, on an intimate basis, the Word of God, including the disciplinary or admonitory aspects of the ministry of the Word, parochial visitation kept the minister informed as to the pastoral needs of the parish, especially the type of sermon which would be most profitably directed to them in the services of public worship.[2] Richard Baxter explained the necessity for close acquaintance of the minister with his parishioners. The minister must labor to be acquainted, he said, not only with the physical circumstances of the people under his care, but also with their state, whether of nature or of grace. He must know their inclinations and conversation, the sins to which they are most addicted, and what religious duties they are most likely to neglect, and what temptations they are most liable to. If the minister does not know the temperament or disease he is to treat, he is not, Baxter argued, likely to prove a successful physician. He concluded that the information essential to performance of the ministerial office could be collected only by pastoral visitation.[3]

A Means of Promoting Family Worship.- A recurring emphasis in the instructions for ministerial visitation written during the period of study is the promotion of family worship through the efforts of the minister in the homes of his parish. He was both

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[1] Op. cit., p. 378. [2] II BOD, iv.10.

[3] Gildas Salvianus: The Reformed Pastor, London: Jas. Nisbet, 1860, p. 141.

to urge its performance and to instruct the heads of families in its accomplishment.[1] Evidence that ministers followed this instruction is scanty. It should not, however, be concluded that ministers did not labor to encourage family worship in their parishes. It is entirely possible that performance of the duty by a minister was taken for granted and that comment was considered unnecessary. In 1649, the Synod of Angus and Mearns ruled that ministers were required to visit all the families of their parishes at least once a year, not only "to impress family worship," but also to take trial of the abilities of the masters of the households in performing these duties.[2] In 1659, the session of Alves asked the minister to accompany the elders in the visitation of their districts "to enquire if families duty be performed especially on the Lord's day and also on week-days."[3] The best known experience of a minister in encouraging family worship is that of William Guthrie of Fenwick. Guthrie had called upon a man whom he particularly wanted to perform family worship. The man gave as an excuse for not conducting worship in his family that he could not pray. Guthrie asked why he could not, to which the man replied that he never was used to pray. Guthrie would not take this for an answer, but insisted that "the man make a trial in that duty before him." The man prayed, "O Lord, thou knowest that this man would have me to

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[1] BOD, ix.

[2] William Cramond, "Extracts from the Records of the Kirk Session of Alyth," Scottish Notes and Queries, Vol. 12, Aberdeen: n. p., 1899, p. 75.

[3] _____, The Church of Alves, p. 35.

pray, but thou knowest that I cannot pray." Guthrie was then willing to admit the strength of the man's argument.[1] It was, apparently, customary to invite the minister to take charge of the family worship service if his visit coincided with the times regularly appointed for worship.[2]

The Conversion of Doubters and Antagonists

The minister, trained in divinity and empowered to teach the Word of God, was expected by the Church to convince or convert the doubters and antagonists within the limits of his jurisdiction. Although his work with doubters will be dealt with in the section on counselling, a special word needs to be said about the minister's responsibility for "antagonists."[3] Not all Scotland was converted to the new faith at the Reformation. The remnant Roman Catholics remained a problem through the seventeenth century. Samuel Rutherford's translation from Anwoth parish was objected to by the Synod of Galloway because, among other reasons, he was so effective in dealing with the many Romans in the district.[4] Probably the outstanding effort of the seventeenth century Church of Scotland to convert Roman Catholics by the private efforts of ministers was the sending, in 1602, by the General Assembly of ministers to convert the "Popish Lords," the nobility who still adhered openly to the Roman

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[1] Scots Worthies, p. 377.

[2] Brodie, op. cit., pp. 359, 420.

[3] BUKS, p. 426; Westminster "Directory for Church Government," p. 173.

[4] "Petition of the Synod of Galloway to the General Assembly," NLS, Wodrow MSS. Folio lxii.53.

faith. In order to ensure their conversion, the ministers were instructed to remain with the families of the Lords continually for three months, to read and to interpret the scriptures at mealtimes, to catechise the families once or twice, at least, every day, and "by conference at all meet occasions, to instruct them in the whole grounds of true religion and godliness."[1] Each session conducted by the ministers was to begin and end with prayer. The Popish Lords, unfortunately, had little intention of being converted and employed every possible means of insuring that the ministers did not enjoy an opportunity to carry out their mission.

Counselling

General.- Probably the most important means of the private ministry of the Word of God was counselling, usually called "religious conference" during the seventeenth century. Possibly because of the personal nature of this task, little evidence remains of actual counselling situations in the period of study. It is unfortunate that biographies of Scottish ministers of the seventeenth century often refer to their skill as counsellors without giving examples of their work.

Types of Counselling.- The counselling of the century was directed, on the one hand, to resolving problems arising from temporal circumstances, such as grief, illness, loss of property or freedom, or any of the other situations involving material or mental difficulty, in which the advice of the pastor might serve

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[1]BUKS, pp. 509ff.

both to relieve the anguish of the sufferer and to relate his experience to the sometimes mysterious purposes of God. This type of counselling situation was called, in the seventeenth century, a "case of the soul." A "case of conscience," on the other hand, was a counselling situation in which the problem of the sufferer was not primarily related to temporal circumstances, but directly concerned his salvation, arising, for example, from doubts as to whether or not he was one of the elect. Cases of conscience were sometimes referred to as religious scruples. Both types of problems were given spiritual answers by the Word of God, either directly from scripture without additional comment, or by the exposition and application of a text by the minister, in much the same way that the sermon is delivered as the Word of God.

Counselling with the Sick and Dying.- In the pastoral counselling of the sick and dying may be found as example of the work of the minister addressed to the circumstances of a temporal situation in which he may help the sufferer not only to adjust to the immediate situation, but by interpreting his experience in terms of God's Word may also help him to become aware of the greater significance of eternal salvation promised to the elect. Scottish thought and practice followed that of the Genevan Church. If, according to the Genevan office for visitation of the sick, the patient is found to be repentant under the buffeting of God's wrath expressed in his illness, the minister is to "lift him up with the sweet promises of God's mercy through Christ, if he perceive him much afraid." If the patient is un-

repentant, the minister is to "beat him down with God's justice."[1] The minister was further required to see that provision was made for the physical needs of the patient. No other mention of the minister's responsibility for visitation of the sick is to be found in the earliest standards of the Scottish Reformation. It is possible that in the years immediately following the Reformation visitation of the sick by the ministry of the Church of Scotland was as much a continuation of Roman custom as the result of a definite theological plan. The Second Book of Discipline included visitation of the sick in the duties of the minister by implication only, in that elders were directed to assist the minister in the visitation of the sick.[2] Inthe description of the responsibilities of the minister there is no mention of visitation of the sick.

The Westminster Assembly reaffirmed the necessity for ministerial visitation of the sick upon the ground that the ministry of the Word might be more welcome under the circumstances, since most men in illness more sharply realize their own limitations and the transitory nature of the world more clearly than at any other time. "Times of sickness and affliction are special opportunities put into [the minister's] hand by God, to minister a word in season to weary souls," it was explained. While the outcome of an illness is in question, a man's conscience is, or should be, directed towards the estate of his soul for eternity, that is, whether or not he is among the elect. "Therefore

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[1]Knox, Works, IV, p. 202.

[2]vi.13. There is no mention of visitation in the description of the duties of the minister.

the minister, being sent for, and repairing to the sick, is to apply himself with all tenderness and love, to administer some spiritual good to his soul...."[1]

If the minister's efforts were to be effective it was necessary that he be sent for while the patient was most aware of his dependence upon God, not only for the outcome of his illness, but also for the welfare of his soul. The Synod of Fife, in mid-seventeenth century, directed that in the event of illness, the responsible elder or deacon should be advised. If the advice was not given, the sick person or the master of the house was to be fined twenty shillings. If the elder or deacon failed to advise the minister of the illness, a fine of forty shillings was to be paid. If the minister failed to visit the sick person promptly, he was to be fined three pounds. If visitation were long neglected, the minister was to be suspended from his office.[2] Henry Scougal explained the difficulty of the ministry to the dying in the following remarkable passage.

> The minister is seldom sent for till the physician has given the patient over; and then they beg him to dress their souls for heaven, when their winding sheet is preparing, and their friends are almost ready to dress the body for the funeral. Now, though some of these have lived well, and, like the wise virgins, have oil in their lamps - yet it is a great matter to calm them, and to dispose their souls for that great change they are presently to undergo. But, alas! it fares otherwise with the greatest part. They are yet strangers to the ways of religion, the work of their salvation is yet to begin, and their lusts to be mortified, their corruptions subdued, the whole frame of their souls to be changed: and though they have scarce so much

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[1] "Directory for Public Worship," p. 159.

[2] Selections from the Minutes of the Synod of Fife 1611-1687, Edinburgh: Abbotsford Club, 1837, p. 22.

> strength as to turn them on their beds, yet their warfare against principalities, powers, and spiritual wickedness is but newly commenced; their work is great, their disadvantages many, and the time very short that is before them. Perhaps they are dull and insensible, and we shall hardly persuade them of their danger. They will acknowledge they are sinners, and so are all others, as well as they: they trust to the mercies of Christ, and have confidence enough of their salvation; and cannot be persuaded they want anything that is necessary for the same. Others of these, again, are seized with fear, and call for the minister to comfort them. What shall he do? Shall he tell them that all their terrors are just, and it is now too late to repent? I know some divines are peremptory in this case, and think that they should be left in despair: but sure, it is a sad employment for a minister, to go to visit a dying man, only to tell him that he is damned; and withal it is too great boldness in us to limit the grace and mercy of God.... All that a minister can do is, to press him to all possible seriousness, and to resign himself to God for the event; or to lay before him, in general, the terms and conditions of the gospel-covenant: the application will be hard and uncertain.[1]

Considerable evidence of counselling with the sick, especially the dying, in the period of study has survived. One reason for the preservation of the last days of many seventeenth century Scottish leaders is that dying statements often served as vehicles for polemical blasts. In most accounts of attendance upon a dying person, the emphasis is upon what is said about the government of the Church or the nation, rather than the settling of fears about the destiny of the soul. The fullest account of the minister's efforts in attending a dying person is found in the description of the final illness of John Gordon, Viscount Kenmuir. This account was first circulated in manuscript, then published in Scots Worthies.

When Kenmuir was taken ill, the minister was absent from

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[1] Op. cit., pp. 211f.

the parish. The minister has been assumed to have been Samuel Rutherford, parish minister at Anwoth and friend of Kenmuir. Without naming him, the account described his as "a religious and learned minister who then lived in Galloway, not far from the house of Kenmuir." When the minister called, on August 31, 1634, Kenmuir "drew on a conference" with him, indicating that he was distraught by the fear of death and extremity of pain. "I never dreamed," he explained, "that death had such a terrible, austere, and gloomy countenance. I dare not die; howbeit, I know I must die." Afraid to come to grips with death, he implored the minister's advice. "What shall I do...I find my sins grievous, and so many that I fear my account is out of order, and not such as becomes a dying man." The minister explained lengthily that the Godly were not exempt from the universal fear of death, but expressed hope that Christ would be his second in the combat, and urged him to rely upon Christ's strength instead of his own. After a while, the minister continued, "My Lord, I fear more the ground of your death which is, as you say, the consciousness of your sins, for there can be no plea betwixt you and your Lord, if your sins be not taken away in Christ; therefore make that sure, and fear not." Kenmuir replied, " I have been too late in coming to God; and have deferred the time of making my account so long, that I fear I have but the foolish virgins' part of it, who came and knocked at the door of the bridegroom so late, and never got in."

The minister then reminded Kenmuir of some of his own and his father's sins, "particularly their cares for this world and worldly honors." Thinking Kenmuir would try to underesti-

mate his fault in these sins, "he drew several weighty propositions, in way of conference, about the fears of death and his eternal all,[1] which depend upon his being in or out of Christ." Because of the mercies of God and the necessity of appearing before Christ the judge, and for the salvation of his soul, the minister urged Kenmuir to exchange his sins for a certificate from Christ before he ventured into eternity. Kenmuir replied, "When I begin to look upon my life I think all is wrong in it, and the lateness of my reckoning affrighteth me; therefore stay with me, and show me the marks of a child of God, for you must be my second in this combat, and wait upon me." His lady, whose presence had not been previously mentioned, said, "You must have Jesus Christ to be your second." "Amen," said Kenmuir, "but how shall I know that I am in the state of grace? for until I be resolved my fears will still overburden me." "My Lord," the minister said, "scarcely or never doth a castaway anxiously and carefully ask the question, whether he is a child of God or not." Kenmuir felt this proved nothing, arguing that every reprobate in hell wished heartily to have the kingdom of heaven. When the minister explained that there was a difference between his desires and those of the reprobate, Kenmuir said, "You never saw any token of true grace in me, and that is my great and only fear."

The minister said that he had been indeed sorry to see Kenmuir so often overcome by temptation, reminding him that he had faithfully warned him that he would regret his transgres-

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[1]I.e., his lot in eternity: heaven or hell.

sions. Kenmuir should not try to escape the sense of guilt for his sins, but humble himself because of them. The minister had observed, in addition to Kenmuir's sins, some signs of Christian virtue. "I thought you ever had a love for the saints, even to the poorest, who carried Christ's image, although they could never serve or profit you in any way," said the minister. Kenmuir was assured that his concern for the Christians with whom he came in contact was evidence that he had met the Biblical requirement for salvation: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."[1] Kenmuir then seemed convinced. It is possible that part of the conversation is not reported at this point. The minister's next question does not agree with Kenmuir's being convinced of his salvation by the minister's counselling. "My Lord," the minister then asked, "dare you now quit your part in Christ, and subscribe an absolute resignation of him?" Kenmuir said it would be too hard, that he hoped he and Christ had more to do together, then asked, "What mark is it to have judgement to discern a minister called and sent of God from an hireling?" The minister said it was a good mark and cited John 10:4, "My sheep know my voice."

At the second conference, the minister urged Kenmuir to deep humiliation. Kenmuir agreed, but said, "Oh! if I could get him! But sin causeth me to be jealous of his love to such a man as I have been." The minister advised him to doubt himself but not Jesus Christ, that there could be no meeting between them without a conviction of sin. Kenmuir wept and "thereafter rec-

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[1] I John 3:14.

koned out a certain number of his sins, which were as serpents or crocodiles before his eyes." The minister told him that death was still far off and that he should think of death as a sweet messenger to carry him to his Father's house. Kenmuir, in tears, said, "God make it so," and asked the minister to pray.

At the third conference, he expressed regret that he had not sought God in prosperity and feared that he was so bound by death that he could not think properly about reckoning with God or about the life to come. "I have taken the play long; God hath given me thirty-five years to repent; but alas! I have mispent them," he said and covered his face and wept. The minister assured him that although his day was nearly spent, he must run in the evening of life and not "lie in the field and miss his lodging." Kenmuir said, "Lord, how can I run? Lord, draw me, and I shall run."[1] The minister told him to pray. He offered only silence, but within an hour prayed in the presence of the minister and Lady Kenmuir, bemoaning his own spiritual and physical weakness. "I dare not knock at thy door," he prayed. "I lie at it scrambling as I may, till thou come out and take me in; I dare not speak; I look up to thee and look for one kiss of Christ's fair face. Oh, when wilt thou come?" The similarity of language of this prayer by Kenmuir to that used by Rutherford is striking.

At the fourth conference, Kenmuir asked the minister to go pray for him in private, earnestly and not just to satisfy

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[1]Song of Solomon 1:4.

custom. "I know," he urged, "prayer will pull Christ out of heaven." "What shall we seek? Give us a commission," said the minister. "I charge you to tell my Beloved that I am sick of love." Should the minister seek his recovery? "Yea," said Kenmuir, "if it be God's good pleasure; for I find my fear of death now less, and I think God is loosing the root of the deepgrown tree of my soul, so firmly fastened to this life." The minister advised Kenmuir that he must covenant with God, dedicating himself and all that he had to God and His service. Kenmuir readily consented. After the minister had recited several scripture passages, such as Psalms 78:36, for grounding the covenant, Kenmuir gave him the Bible and asked him to mark other passages. The minister marked II Corinthians 5, Revelation 21 and 22, Psalm 38, and John 15. Kenmuir read through them, crying often for one love-blink, "O Son of God, for one sight of thy face." The minister returned and told him his prayers had been heard. Kenmuir took his hand and cried, "Good news, indeed!" He asked the minister and others if they had gotten access to God in their prayers for his soul. Being assured that they had, he rejoiced and said, "Then will I believe and wait on. I cannot think but my Beloved is coming, leaping over the hills." The account of this counselling session neglects to mention whether or not the minister actually withdrew to another room for private prayer. Possibly the reason for Kenmuir's asking if they had had access to God was that the minister and others not specified had just returned from their prayers on his behalf.

When friends came to visit him, he would send them out to pray for him. When it seemed that he was recovering from his

fever, he sent for the minister. When the minister arrived, Kenmuir told him, "Rejoice now, for he is come. Oh! if I had a tongue to tell the world what Jesus Christ hath done for my soul!" Thinking himself on the way to recovery, Kenmuir "became more careless, remiss, and dead for some days, and seldom called for the minister, though he would not suffer him to go home to his flock." Lady Kenmuir asked the attending physician what hopes there were for his recovery. He told them that there was nothing but death for him if the flux returned. Kenmuir's release was short lived. The flux soon returned. The minister went to him and warned him of his imminent danger and that Satan was anxious to steal his sleeping soul out of this world. The physician agreed that death was soon to come. Kenmuir took the minister's hand, thanked him for his straightforward warning and acknowledged his foolishness in returning his attentions to the temporal life after once preparing for his journey to heaven. Then he ordered all to leave the room except the minister. After the door was shut, they conferred about the state of Kenmuir's soul. The minister offered a prayer, then told him that the joy he had experienced when he felt reconciled to God had been ill-founded and that he had not humiliated himself deeply enough. He urged him to dig deeper in renouncing the flesh and accused him of offenses against both the first and second tables of the Law. Kenmuir confessed a number of great sins.[1] The minister was astonished at Kenmuir's reckoning of his sins, con-

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[1]The party bias of the account is revealed by the fact that the chief sin confessed was alleged to be leaving the last Parliament when the Presbyterian cause needed his support.

sidering his effort to be evidence of grace in his soul and progress toward regeneration. It should be observed that in the text, Kenmuir is always said to "reckon" or "reckon out" his sins. There is no hint in the account of a sacramental type of confession. In the interview here described there was nothing resembling absolution. However, this scene followed the confession:

> The minister stood up and read the first eight verses in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and discoursed thereon; then cited the eighth verse of the twenty-first chapter of Revelation, and told him that he had not one word of mercy from the Lord to him, and so turned his back. At this his lordship cried out with tears, that they heard him at some distance, saying, "God armed is coming against me to beat out my brains! I would die - I dare not die! I would live - I dare not live! O what a burden is the hand of an angry God! Oh! what shall I do? Is there no hope of mercy?" In this agony he lay for some time. Some said that the minister would kill him; others, that he would make him despair; but he bore with them, and went to a secret place, where he sought words from God to speak to this patient.[1]

After this conference, another minister visited Kenmuir. "He hath slain me," Kenmuir related, but added before the second minister could reply, "Not he, but the Spirit of God in him." The minister who had been with him throughout the account said, "Not I, but the law hath slain you," and told him of the process the Lord had against the house of Kenmuir. The second minister read the story of Manasseh, his wicked life, and how he had pleaded with the Lord.[2] The attending minister, however, insisted that the wrath of God was being directed against Kenmuir,

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[1] pp. 196f.

[2] There is no further mention of the "other minister."

urging him to think of "the lake of fire and brimstone, of everlasting burning, and of utter darkness, with the devil and his angels." Kenmuir answered, "Woe is me, if I should suffer my thoughts to dwell upon it at any time, it were enough to cause me to go out of my senses. But I pray you, what shall I do?" The attending minister told him to mourn for offending God, adding, "What, my Lord, if Christ had given out the sentence of condemnation against you, and come to your bedside and told you of it; would not you still love him, trust in him, and hang upon him?" "God knoweth," replied Kenmuir, "I durst not challenge him; yea, though the Lord should slay me, yet will I trust in him. I will lie down at God's feet, let him trample upon me, if I die, I will die at Christ's feet." Kenmuir then pleaded for some sign of mercy on God's part. The minister said:

> Is it possible, my Lord, that you can love and long for Christ, and he not love and long for you? Can love and kindness stand only on your side? Is your poor love more than infinite love, seeing he hath said (Isa. xlix: 15), "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." My Lord, be persuaded; you are graven upon the palms of God's hands.[1]

Kenmuir smiled, turned to one of his attendants, and said, "I am written, man, upon the palms of Christ's hands - he will not forget me. Is not this brave talking?"

Later, the minister, finding him weaker, said, "My Lord, the marriage-day is drawing near; make ready; set aside all care of your estate and the world, and give yourself to meditation

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[1]Pp. 197f.

and prayer and spiritual conference." After this, he spent a great deal of time in prayer. Even when he seemed to be asleep, he was overheard to be praying. He fell asleep and on waking, called for a kinsman with whom he had an unsettled grievance and a minister he had not forgiven for an earlier injury. To the latter he said, "I have ground of offense against you as a natural man, and I do to you that which all men breathing could not have moved me to do; but now, because the Holy Spirit commands me, I must obey, and therefore freely I forgive you, as I would wish you to forgive me." His cousin he advised to avoid Episcopacy.

Kenmuir asked the minister to sleep upon a bed on the floor of his room, saying, "You and I have a far journey to go, make ready for it." Four nights before his death, Kenmuir was advised by the minister, "My Lord, I have good news to tell you. Be not afraid of death and judgement, because the process that your judge had against you is cancelled and rent in pieces, and Christ hath trampled it under his feet." He replied, "Oh! that is a lucky tale. I will then believe and rejoice, for sure I am that Christ and I once met, and will he not come again?" "You have gotten the first fruit of the Spirit, the earnest thereof, and Christ will not lose his earnest," said the minister, "therefore the bargain betwixt him and you holdeth." Kenmuir wanted to know what Christ is like, so that he could recognize him. "He is like love, and altogether lovely," was the minister's response. "My Lord," he said further, "if you had the man Christ in your arms, would your heart, your breast, and sides be pained with a stitch?" Kenmuir answered, "God knoweth I would forget

my pain, thrust him to my heart; yea, if I had my heart in the palm of my hand I would give it to him, and think it a gift too unworthy of Him." Kenmuir complained that Jesus was coming and going and found his soul drowned in heaviness because when the Lord did come, he did not stay long. The minister said, "Wooers dwell not together, but married folk take up house and sunder not; Jesus is now wooing, and therefore he feedeth his own with hunger, which is as growing meat, as the sense of his presence." As death came closer, Kenmuir said often, "Son of God, when wilt thou come? God is not a man that he should change, or as the son of man that he should repent. Them that come to Christ he casteth not away, but raiseth them up at the last day." In his sleep he said, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." On waking he asked, "When will my heart be loosed and my tongue untied, that I may express the sweetness of the love of God to my own soul?" He immediately added, "Even when the wind bloweth."

As Kenmuir was dying, the minister said, "My Lord, our nature is anxious for our own deliverance; whereas God seeketh first to be glorified in our faith, patience and hope." Kenmuir answered, "Good reason to be first served. Lord give me to wait on; only, Lord, turn me not to dross." One of the others about him said, "Cast back your eyes, my Lord, on what you have received, and be thankful." Kenmuir broke forth in praising God, and finding himself now weakened, his speech failing more than an hour before his death, he desired the minister to pray. After prayer, the minister asked, "My Lord, may you now sunder with Christ?" He was unable to answer. Later, the minister asked him, "Have you any sense of the Lord's love?" "I have,"

Kenmuir replied. "Do you now enjoy?" "I do enjoy." "Will ye not sunder with Christ," the minister asked again. "By no means," said Kenmuir - his last words. The minister asked if he should pray; Kenmuir turned his eyes toward him. During the prayer, Kenmuir smiled and looked upward. His life and the prayer were concluded together.[1]

The authority of the minister in spiritual matters is emphatically asserted in the foregoing account. For example, the minister did not hesitate to speak the mind of God on specific issues. As death drew near, the minister told Kenmuir that he was graven on God's hands and, later, that his sins were forgiven.

Especially dramatic is the technique employed by the minister to induce heartfelt repentance and utter dependence upon Christ. Although Kenmuir was known to be dying, the minister straightforwardly - almost brutally - confronted him with his sins and the damnation they deserved. To the modern pastor, it seems incredible that after hearing a dying man confess his sins, a minister would give a brief exposition of passages from Hebrews and Revelation, tell his counsellee that there was not "one word of mercy from the Lord" for him, then turn his back. No wonder Kenmuir cried out! When another minister sought to soften the blow, the minister who attended Kenmuir advised his lordship that the wrath of God was upon him and that he should be thinking about hell and its terrors. Kenmuir repented and was comforted by the attending minister with assurances of God's

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[1]Pp. 190ff.

forgiveness and regeneration. According to the account, Kenmuir died in peace, assured of Christ's final victory and of his share in that victory.

Counselling with Those Awaiting Execution.- The Restoration brought with it the attempted suppression of the Presbyterian form of church government. Charles II set out to deprive the Church of its leadership, and in the last decades of Stuart power many were executed for their religious convictions. The first martyr was the Marquis of Argyll. The support given him in his need by the attending ministers may be considered typical of this form of pastoral counselling.

As Argyll left Edinburgh Castle for his execution, James Guthrie, himself condemned to die, said, "My Lord, God has been with you, He is with you, and He will be with you." Guthrie understood what Argyll was experiencing. He did not dismiss the ordeal as insignificant because it was temporal, insisting that he wished he were able to take Argyll's place. Argyll was assured that the execution was no simple misfortune or accident of man or nature, but that in his experience was to be seen the hand of God guiding his destiny. At the scaffold, George Hutcheson attended him. As Argyll stepped forward to the "maiden" (a type of guillotine), Hutcheson said, "Hold your grip sicker - keep your grasp unshaken on Him who is faithful and True." In his extreme circumstances, Argyll was reminded not to depend on himself, but upon the strength of the Lord.[1] Although the cir-

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[1] Scots Worthies, p. 301; Smellie, op. cit., p. 68.

cumstances were more dramatic as men went to their executions, the content of the pastoral counselling was essentially the same as that offered in more conventional situations. The person facing death was urged to place his dependence altogether upon Christ.

Counselling with Those in Emotional or Mental Difficulty.- An example of the technique of pastoral counselling of emotionally disturbed persons by the seventeenth century ministry of the Church of Scotland is found in the Autobiography of Robert Blair. The chief constable of Blair's parish and one of his tenants called on Blair one day to make arrangements for baptizing the child of the tenant, for Blair "baptized none till first I conferred with the father, and exhorted and instructed him, as need required." After Blair had spoken with the tenant, the constable dismissed the latter and asked to speak to Blair privately. When Blair looked closely, he found his visitor's eyes to look like the eyes of a cat in the night. Although he thought the man up to some mischief, he "resolved not to refuse what he desired," but kept a watchful eye on him, and kept his distance. As soon as they had entered the door of the church, the constable began to tremble, and Blair began to wonder. The trembling increased, and Blair helped him to a seat, but it seemed the trembling would throw him from it. Blair asked what his trouble was, but the man could not answer. Eventually, the shaking stopped, and the man explained that the devil had appeared to him. In Glasgow, he had purchased a horse from the devil and had unintentionally sold himself in the transaction.

A few days later, the devil came to his house and called him by name, reminding him that he had been purchased. Other meetings followed, and the man fled to Ireland. The devil followed. Lately, he explained to Blair, the devil had instructed him to kill and slay. He had come close to carrying out the command, but something had always stopped him. When Blair asked whom he had been instructed to kill, the man did not give a direct answer, but his actions led Blair to believe that he himself was the intended victim. Then the man fell "a-crying and lamenting." "I showed him the horribleness of his ignorance and drunkenness," reported Blair. Although Blair meant the man's ignorance of the power of God available to him, it is not clear whether he meant spiritual or corporal drunkenness. The context will allow either interpretation. The constable, at the conclusion of the conference, made many promises of reformation. The promises were not well kept and a fortnight later the devil appeared to ask why the man had revealed their private transactions to Blair. The devil followed him to his house, pulled the cap off his head and tore his shirt, saying, "On Hallow-night, I shall have thee, soul and body, in despite of the minister and all he will do for thee." The man, terrified, sent for Blair. He begged Blair to stay with him the night appointed for his being carried away. "I instructed him the best I could," related Blair, "and praying with him, promised to be with him that night, providing he would flee to Christ for refuge, and not to me, who was but a weak and wretched creature."

As the sun went down on Halloween, Blair was perplexed. He could not break the promise he had made, but hardly felt that

he could keep it, "being so unprepared for so pitched a conflict." Finally, losing all confidence in himself, he went, trusting in the Lord's "gracious goodness who is the preserver of men against the wiles and violence of Satan." At twilight, he explained the problem to one of his elders, asking him to convene the people of the village and to tell them only that he would spent the night with them in the constable's house. In the house, Blair "began with prayer, and thereafter expounded the doctrine of Christ's temptations, closing with a prayer and singing of a psalm, and after that did the like upon another passage of scripture till towards the morning," remaining close by the sick man's bed. Whenever the constable did not understand something Blair said, he would grab Blair's arm and request an explanation. Blair always tried to explain to the man's satisfaction. When morning came, the man took charge of himself and defied Satan and all his works. He recovered and behaved himself better, but Blair was never fully satisfied with "his still continuing ignorance." He did not, however, see the devil again.[1]

Immediately after the above account, Blair's life tells of his work with an unbalanced minister. This time, he was not successful and the sufferer finally went off to see the seven churches of Asia.[2] In both cases, the minister's work was severely handicapped by superstition and absence of an understanding of psychological processes.

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[1] The Life of Mr. Robert Blair, ed. Thomas McCrie, Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1848, pp. 65ff.

[2] Ibid., pp. 72ff.

In his collections for the life of William Livingstone, minister at Lanark and father of the better known John Livingstone, Wodrow included an account said to be verbatim excerpts of the elder Livingstone's counselling with one of his parishioners. The counsellee, Mrs. Bessie Clarkson, appears to have been suffering from extreme depression. She "fell under heavy trouble in 1621" and seems to have continued in a desperate state until the time of her death in 1625. On the first call Livingstone made after hearing of her difficulty, he began, "Bessie, how are you?" She replied, "I find the wrath of an angry God, a crabbed God, and all the wrath you preached, is come upon me now." Livingstone explained that her distress, far from being a sign of reprobation, was a sign of God's concern for her salvation and evidence that her regeneration had begun. His logic failed to reassure her. Throughout the entire period during which Livingstone counselled her, the record of her speeches is a testimony of torment. It was impossible to comfort her. At every point of the minister's argument, she replied in despair. When she bemoaned her lack of faith, Livingstone reminded her that to discover a need for faith is a major step towards full faith. She interrupted his explanation and said, "Say, Thou wretched, sinful, wicked woman, and not tell me sweet words." At another time, she lamented the fact that sickness had kept her from hearing the Word preached. Livingstone replied that there was no offense in the missing of public worship by the sick. She was instructed to seek God through prayer, "Who, by His Spirit, will teach you inwardly, and supply the want of outward means, by an inward working." "I cannot find that," she

answered. She cried that no one had ever been left in her unbearable condition. Livingstone pointed out that Job, David, and Hezekiah had been in essentially the same distress and that they had been loved of God and seen through their distress.

During one visit, after Livingstone had prayed with her, she said, "If your prayers have a good ground, and be according to God's word, it will be the better heard." Livingstone assured her that the prayer was so founded, then said, "I have a warrant to mourn with, to pity and pray for all that are in trouble, chiefly those of my own flock." His warrant would have been valid, she lamented, if she had been one of Christ's flock. In the last interview recorded, Mrs. Clarkson still conplained that her difficulty was her lack of faith. She bitterly declared that no hope remained. Livingstone's reply was very similar to what he had said at their first meeting, intended to help her realize that the first step in regeneration is the renouncing of one's own strength, so that faith and acceptance of faith can follow:

> Bessie, the Lord will oft for good causes, desert his dearest saints, and withdraw himself from their sight, and sense, for their humiliation, and instruction, that they count not grace naturall, for their greater consolation, when he cometh again, and for their probation, and to make them follow after him, when he withdraweth his grace; and yet it's not a real, but a supposed desertion; wherefore seek his sensible presence; and break through all impediments, of terrors, Blindness, and unbelief, or any thing else; thrumble through all, and he shall come leaping over the mountains of your sins, and hills of wrath, with the voice of heavenly consolation.[1]

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[1]Robert Wodrow, MS "Biographical Collections," (7 vols., Glasgow Univ. Library, II, p. 12.

She was little helped. In April 1625, Bessie Clarkson died. Livingstone was absent at a meeting of the provincial assembly in Glasgow. As she died she heaved her hands and eyes heavenward, proof to Livingstone that she had found unspeakable joy at the moment of her being called home.[1] From the course of the entire counselling process, covering about four years and producing few results, her gestures at death might just as readily be interpreted as showing her desperation. Again, we find the pastoral work of the ministry severely handicapped by inadequate understanding of the complexity of the human mind. In this case, the woman apprears to have been suffering from extreme mental depression about her salvation. In the terminology of the seventeenth century, she was suffering from both a case of the saul and a case of conscience or, more properly, from a case of the soul resulting from a case of conscience. The treatment used was more an attempt to correct her theology than to relieve her emotional distress as such. The reasons for the technique used by Livingstone in attempting to counsel with Bessie Clarkson become clear only by understanding the seventeenth century views on cases of conscience.

Cases of Conscience

Theory.- "Cases of conscience" or "scruples" had to do with doubts or concerns about election, regeneration, or some other religious problem. The treatment of such "cases" was an outstanding feature of the private ministry of the Word in seventeenth century Scotland. It was assumed that the human mind and conscience proceeded in the reasoning processes according

to the classical rules for deductive reasoning. Therefore, the practical theologians of the period argued that if identical premises were presented to a number of individuals, identical conclusions would be drawn. Individual variations in the conclusions drawn from identical data were explained in terms of an "ill conscience." That is, the mind and conscience had drawn the proper conclusion, but the conscience, through malfunction, might misrepresent the conclusion. The assumptions about the operation of the conscience are basic to the theology of pastoral care in the seventeenth century Scottish Church and will be discussed at length in the final chapter. Here, the primary consideration will be the practical application of these principles.

Polemical Use.- The national and ecclesiastical conflict that gripped seventeenth century Scotland was always near the surface in almost every area of thought. It is not surprising that the conscience was enlisted to support both sides of the controversy. Partisans tried to convince the readers of their pamphlets that the conscience, directed by scripture, demanded that they support Presbytery and fight Episcopacy or vice versa. It was more than likely, too, that holding contrary views indicated an evil conscience and possible reprobation. The same practice, apparently, was widespread in England during the century. Izaak Walton complained that "scruplemongers pretended a tenderness of conscience, refusing to take an oath" to their lawful government, but swearing to preserve the Presbyterian doctrine and disci-

pline.[1] On the Presbyterian side in Scotland, George Gillespie sought to prove, as a case of conscience, that it would be disasterous to employ malignants in positions of responsibility.[2] In Naphtali, the Pentland Rising was justified as a matter of conscience.[3] The most scholarly effort in the controversy was written by Robert Leighton, on the Episcopal side. Although the MS is incomplete, what Leighton was seeking to prove is clear.

Leighton's "Rule of Conscience."- Although Leighton's treatise on conscience obviously supported the party interests of the king, it would be unfair to say that the document was intended to be a theological prop for the tyranny of Charles II. The work is typical of Leighton's thought and expresses his conviction that the rule exercised by the civil government was a matter of absolute indifference to the Christian, who should limit his interests to spiritual matters.

In the introductory portion of the "Rule of Conscience," he assembled from classical philosophy, medieval scholasticism, and the theology of Calvin the hypotheses from which he drew his conclusions about the conscience. He began with a discussion of the supreme cause, God, and of the four secondary causes enumerated by Aristotle, explaining how each affected the nature of the conscience. In terms of orthodox Calvinism, he then expoun-

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[1] Life of Hooker, cited by William West, ed., Leighton's Works, VII, pp. 223f.

[2] An Useful Case of Conscience Discussed and Resolved, Edinburgh: Andro Wilson, 1649.

[3] Cited by West, ibid., p. 224.

ded the Sovereignty of God, man's free will, and the operation of the divine will. Largely on the basis of the foregoing, he deduced an hierarchy of laws in which the higher law exercised absolute jurisdiction over the lower. The order of precedence, he gave as follows: (1) the Law of God, consisting of the Law of Nature and Scripture Revelation, (2) the Law of Nations, (3) the Law of Necessity, (4) the Law of our Superiors, and (5) the Law of Conscience.

He then took up the study of the conscience itself. In essentially the same terms as those used by David Dickson, who was professor of divinity at the University of Edinburgh while Leighton was principal, Leighton defined conscience as "that light which God hath set up in every intelligent and rational creature to direct them, admonish and censure them; it exercises the office of a lawgiver in directing them; of a monitor and witness to advertise or testify for or against them; of a judge to sentence them." He affirmed that the conscience is the "Image of God in the soul of man," the purest fountain of morality, and the surest protection against profane practices.

Against the insistance of the Presbyterian party that conscience demanded resistance to the ecclesiastical policies of the king, Leighton argued that ignorance blinds the conscience and that stubborness, will, or self-interest were often mistaken for conscience. Therefore, he concluded, those who sought to defend the Church against the civil power were not obeying the demands of conscience but were victims of their own ignorance or desires. The conscience, he insisted, had ~~no~~

no jurisdiction in the matter. From the propositions set forth in the introduction, Leighton argued that God, not the conscience, is the absolute ruler and judge of our actions. Under the Law of God, but superior to the Law of Conscience, stood the Law of our Superiors. Superiors, in making laws for our government acted as God's deputies or vice-regents, he said. Therefore, the laws of the civil government were to be obeyed rather than the dictates of an individual conscience. He then attempted to show the reasonableness of the hierarchy of laws. The individual conscience could be ignorant or mistaken. On the other hand, he reasoned that since God had invested the king with power and authority over the individual, He had given the conscience of the king a more "eminent measure of power and authority, than that given the conscience of any private man." Too, the enactment of the law represented the endorsement of the consciences of all those who composed the lawmaking body. Leighton's reasoning about royal and parliamentary consciences seems incredibly naive. In speaking of the collective conscience of a lawmaking body, he assumed that the consciences of those who constituted the body would not be susceptible to the same failures he saw in men of lesser authority. The evidence relative to the conscience of Charles II does not lend support to Leighton's theory of the infallibility of the royal conscience.

Leighton gave two limits within which, he argued, the conscience was compelled to act. First, the conscience cannot oppose, contradict, or disobey divine laws. The conscience must yield to them or be accounted an ill conscience. Secondly, the

conscience may not "disparage, disobey, or rebutt against supreme authority and the public laws of the commonwealth." A properly functioning conscience, said Leighton, will precipitate unquestioning obedience to the decrees of government. The conscience should be concerned, he said, only with the personal actions and private affairs of the individual insofar as those actions and affairs are not controlled by a higher authority, divine or human, in the hierarchy of laws. In other words, although the conscience is the "Image of God in the soul of man," directing the decisions each man must make in his moral and spiritual life, the conscience must avoid all matters already decided by the expressed will of divine or civil authority. Even when the laws of the civil government proved to be contrary to the will of God, the conscience could not demand resistance to the government. According to Leighton:

> If the powers on earth command anything contrary to the express command of God, we are no ways to give a like obedience, for it is better to obey God than man; but we must give passive obedience and suffer, for it is better to suffer than sin, and if we suffer for righteousness' sake happy are we. But in no way are we to resist; resistance is absolutely forbidden, and that upon pain of condemnation, and thus even when the powers are tyrannical in passing many oppressive acts; yea, when they are heathenish and idolatrous, commanding many ungodly and profane things; yea, when they are anti-christian, giving out many severe edicts, persecuting Christians, and all who called upon the name of Jesus; this was Paul's Gospel.[1]

Leighton's views on conscience, however well-intended, meant blindness to the social and ethical issues of the day.[2]

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[1] Ibid., VII, pp. 221ff.

[2] Hector MacPherson, "The Later Covenanting Movement With Special Reference to Religion and Ethics," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1923, p. 55.

There should be little wonder he retired to his sister's home in England rather than face the realities of life in seventeenth century Scotland.

The Casuistry of David Dickson.- The work of David Dickson in treating cases of conscience was the outstanding effort in this field of pastoral care in seventeenth century Scotland. Unlike the writers of the works mentioned above, Dickson sought neither to produce nor to retard social or political action by his writings on the conscience and its treatment, but to help ministers minister to the needs of those who suffered from doubts about their election or salvation. Dickson's writings express the theological principles of Calvin and the Westminster Assembly, but cannot be considered polemical since they were written at the peak of Presbyterian power in mid-seventeenth century when there was no reason to think that the Covenant and the Westminster standards would not indefinitely guide the labors of the Church of Scotland.

There is no record of an actual counselling session conducted by Dickson, but in the writings here discussed, he established a theological basis for pastoral counselling and gave a systematic and extensive casuistry with solutions to what he considered to be the most important problems which might be brought to the minister's attention.

Therapeutica Sacra.- In Therapeutica Sacra, first written in Latin as a theological textbook, then translated by the author into English for popular use, Dickson gave the principles for

pastoral care through the treatment of the conscience and a casuistical manual. The conscience was defined as "the understanding power of our souls examining how matters stand between God and us."[1] The conscience compares the will of God revealed in the scriptures with our thoughts, words, and deeds, done or omitted, and passes judgment on us. A conscience is diseased, said Dickson, when it "is senseless of its own evils and dangers it is in and sitteth down securely, and resteth without a warrand," or when it has been correctly wounded and is laboring under the sense of its pain, or is upset by mistakes and ignorance of how to make use of the true remedy."[2] Dickson maintained that the cure of diseases or cases of conscience was the most important application of divinity and that its effectiveness depended upon a "prudent application and use-making of divine Covenants, made about and with man, for his coming into eternal life."[3] In the casuistical portion of the book, about which this chapter will be concerned, Dickson analysed the application of the covenants to treat specific diseases of conscience which impede regeneration, the most serious of which might altogether prevent regeneration.[4]

Diseases Which Can Prevent Regeneration.-

Diseases Which Might Prevent Examination of the Conscience.- Diseases of the conscience which make self-examination unprofitable may altogether prohibit regeneration. Diseases

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[1]Edinburgh: Evan Tyler, 1664, p. 3. [2]P. 8.

[3]P. 1 [4]P. 162.

which prevent the examination of the conscience, according to Dickson,[1] include gross ignorance, heresy, atheism, hedonism, fear of what examination might reveal, postponement of examination, and immoderate care for the things of this life. These diseases are difficult for the pastor to meet, he admitted, but persons suffering from them may be forced, against their will, by the preaching of the Word, to examine their consciences. For example, Paul preached to Felix the governor and almost persuaded him against his will. ~~Too,~~ It is also possible for the conscience to be awakened by affliction. The pastor must not only exhort men to a voluntary examination of themselves, but also through the word, labor to dash the security of proud sinners, showing them, whenever occasion permits, their sin, and pronouncing the wrath of God against them, hoping that thus the Lord may give them repentance.[2]

The pastor, Dickson advised, having done all within his power, must not worry about the success of his labors when dealing with obstinate sinners, whose consciences cannot be awakened by challenges, threatenings, or exhortation. After working with the sinner, publicly and privately, he should commit the matter to God, who will, at the proper time call each of His elect. The minister should not cease to labor with anyone under his charge, even if he does rely on God for the outcome, Dickson said, but must follow such a course as seems most likely to re-

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[1] These diseases "cannot easily be numbered, because of the multitude of deceits, whereby the unregenerate are deluded," p. 162.

[2] P. 164.

duce him to repentance.[1]

Ignorance.- In dealing with ignorance, the use of the catechism is paramount. Because of the length and complexity of the catechism, Dickson felt that the minister would better serve the "ruder and ignorant sort" in his parish by preparing a sum of saving knowledge in six or seven headings and holding forth on these, "so that in the space of an hour or thereby, before they dissolve their meeting, they may, if they be attentive and willing to learn, have some measure of sound light and understanding of the grounds of true religion."[2] Dickson himself prepared A Sum of Saving Knowledge which has become a classic in the Scottish Church and is still bound in editions of the standards of the Church of Scotland. Dickson did not discuss the more extended catechetical work of the minister, since he felt it was too well known to his readers.

Heresy.- "Gross error," or heresy, should be dealt with by the pastor in conference. Dickson felt that success would be more likely if the pastor proceeded from points on which both the minister and the sufferer were in agreement, proceeding slowly to the mistaken point. If he were to attack the error straightaway, there would be little hope of convincing his counsellee. However, if the error became publicly known and likely to lead others astray, the pastor should publicly refute the heresy, showing how it is contrary to the Word of God, and its fearful consequences.[3]

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[1] Ibid. [2] P. 165. [3] P. 169

Atheism.- Although Dickson saw little hope for the conversion of atheists, he insisted that pastors were obliged to labor with them as God patiently permitted them to live.[1] Conference, or counselling, was not, he said, an effective means of dealing with such men because they "cannot abide free dealing from any man in private." Instead, the pastor must deal with the disease in general in his sermons, that the atheist might be convinced from the scripture of his ignorance in God's ways. The minister must use as strong terms as possible, but avoid particularization, "whereby such a man one or more of the auditors may appear to be picked out and shot at." Above all, the pastor should be vigilant for a calamity in the life of the atheist, then "wisely labour with all meekness and tenderness to awaken up his conscience to take notice of the sparks of wrath," hoping the Lord will give the man repentance and faith in Christ. It is noted that Dickson expected the seventeenth century atheist to be present regularly in church.

Hedonism.- Dickson felt very strongly about those who sinned continually to satisfy their appetites, sinning so frequently that they had lost all sense of sin and enjoyed no more control of themselves than beasts. The remedy of this bestiality lies more with the magistrate, he said, whose duty it is to bind and punish beasts and madmen, than the Church whose severest penalties seem too mild. Should the magistrate fail in his duty to chastise such persons, the minister, Dickson held,

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[1]Pp. 170f.

was required to do what he could. In spite of the small hope of recovery from this disease statedin the scriptures, some had been converted and saved by faith in Christ. The minister should try to reason in private with such men, especially in a time of calamity or when they have been punished by the civil power, hoping that they may repent and fly to Christ.[1]

Fear of the Consequences of Examination of the Conscience.- When the pastor deals with a man who refuses to examine his conscience for fear of the consequences, said Dickson, he must convince him that there is no place to hide from God, that all must die and then come to judgment, and that the only alternative to eternal torment is for the man to judge and condemn himself, then fly to Christ. To this end, the pastor must show him that his fears are groundless, and by use of Scripture texts, urge self-examination.[2]

Postponement of Examination of the Conscience.- Spiritual laziness is not easily cured, Dickson maintained, unless the "Lord take up a rod and rouse the sluggard out of his sleep." The pastor should, in private conference, endeavor to lead the sluggard to admit his fault. In his preaching, he should emphasize the certainty and consequences of the law of God, so that the danger of putting off self-examination "in this brittle and frail life" may be understood."[3]

Undue Care for Earthly Things.- When men are too concerned with their civil vocation or material possessions, the

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[1]Pp. 175ff. [2]Pp. 177ff. [3]P. 179.

pastor should, both in public sermons and private conferences, emphasize the supreme importance of the welfare of the soul compared with temporal concerns. He should not, said Dickson, condemn diligence, but should urge such moderation "that the precious excellency of the soul, and the infinite worth of eternal life" be provided for above all earthly things. Things temporal and eternal will be kept in proper relation if, daily, the conscience is examined, sin confessed, and Christ resorted to for pardon. Such a course will lead to an understanding of the proper place and use of riches, which are of great spiritual benefit, for example, when used to relieve the distress of the poor.[1]

Diseases that Produce Desperation.- The second type of disease of the conscience that hinders regeneration was described by Dickson as that which, following examination of the conscience, produces despair of all remedy offered by Christ. The result is that the sufferer renounces the counsel of God and follows Satan and his own heart. The desperation may be of two types. "Secure desperation" is a type of hedonism and requires much the same treatment as explained above.[2] "Anxious tormenting desperation" comes from the "apprehension of his guiltiness of irremissible sins, and fear of inextricable woeful misery." The sufferer casts away all hope of relief from his guilt, and turns either to material compensation or to suicide. The former alternative is almost identical with "secure desperation," and should be treated as a type of hedonism.[3]

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[1]Pp. 179ff. [2]P. 184. [3]P. 185.

In his discussion of "anxious tormenting desperation," Dickson explained how such a state may result in suicide. Voluntary self-murder, distinguished from that performed in madness, he said, "proceedeth from properly called desperation, because the wretch, after deliberation, how to escape from misery lying on and coming on, when all hope seemeth to fail him," stops looking for the remedy of his difficulty. Convinced that he can be in no worse condition after his death, he comes to believe that there is no other way to be rid of his present torment than by death. Accordingly, he "wittingly and willingly putteth hand in himself."[1] Such a man is sometimes motivated by spiritual guilt, sometimes by worldly misery.

Dickson thus advised the spiritual treatment of an intended suicide:

> To this end, where an fear or suspicion of any intention toward this fearful sin doth appear, all meekness should be used by all that have interest in the person suspected, that may serve the vexed party from such a mischief; God must be in-called and requested for relief unto the patient: Physicians should be called, and more Pastors than one, if they can be had, the soul in danger must be watched and waited on, in a prudent manner night and day that he never be alone. If the person be capable of reason, he must be dealt with freely to confess his temptation and purpose toward the sin, the causes moving him must be enquired after; and if they be other than sense of sin and fear, or feeling of God's wrath, then course must be taken to make the party sensible of sin and to fear God's wrath, that if they give way to that sin they are tempted unto, they do no less, in effect, than cast themselves in hell...from which fearful destruction, they may be preserved both in soul and body, if they acknowledge their sin, and fly to God in Christ offering grace and pardon of sins....[2]

Dickson's analysis of the psychology of suicide is most

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[1] Pp. 187f.

[2] Pp. 188f.

keen. Although he does not hesitate to condemn the sin of suicide as, in effect, unpardonable, he shows great sympathy and understanding of what the person tempted is suffering. It is typical, too, of Dickson's thought that no temporal misery can be reckoned to have a fraction of the terror held by the misery resulting from God's displeasure. Any temporal suffering, Dickson felt, was to be embraced in order to avoid God's condemnation. If the intended suicide was found to have been motivated toward his deed by a sense of guilt, it was most important that the grace offered in the Gospel be explained to him. Such explanations often resulted, Dickson reported, in great blessings. The pastor must be especially careful in treating this disease, since its symptoms are the same for the elect, who recover, as for the reprobate, who perish from it. "Therefore, care must be had of every one under such temptations, whatsoever the event may be and the Lords blessing waited for in the use of the means described above."[1]

Diseases that Produce Groundless Absolution.- The third type of disease that hinders regeneration is that type in which the conscience is examined and absolution is groundlessly pronounced by the conscience, in order to permit the sufferer to do as he pleases. Although this type of sufferer deserves "to be beaten with a rod, rather than to be reasoned with," the pastor must deal with him as with other sinners, applying the scripture to his disease.[2] Dickson gave several examples of the variations in this disease, together with the scripture passages that

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[1]Pp. 188f.

[2]P. 192.

provided the remedies.

The principal disease in this category is "justification by works." The mistake these sufferers make is that they do not repent, but feel that they can earn righteousness through their own efforts. They have neither a sense of the greatness of their sinfulness nor of the righteousness of Christ.[1] Dickson pointed out that Romans 3:20 states that no one shall, in the eyes of God, be justified by the deeds of the Law, but he does not prescribe a procedure for the minister to follow in applying this scripture passage as the remedy for the disease. Dickson had strong convictions concerning the efficacy of the Word. Since this type of disease comes either from a false principle of absolution or the wrong application of the true principle,[2] Dickson must have considered that confrontation with the contrary doctrine in scripture would be sufficient to solve the problem.

Diseases of the Conscience Found only in the Regenerate Man.- After discussing the diseases of the conscience that hinder or prevent regeneration and can be found in both elect and reprobate, Dickson devoted the balance of Therapeutica Sacra to a discussion of and a casuistical manual for those diseases which may be found only in the elect after regeneration. Because of such diseases of the conscience, the regenerate man has doubts, or scruples, as to whether he is in a state of grace, i. e., regenerate, or - even if convinced of his regeneration - as to his

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[1] Pp. 193f.

[2] Pp. 190f.

condition in the state of grace. The treatment of these diseases was important, Dickson felt, even though they could not prevent regeneration. Unless a convert is certain of his regeneration, he cannot properly thank God for his salvation. Satan tries to confuse the man in order to diminish his service, and God creates doubts in the regenerate man in order to forge his faith. The result, as Dickson saw it, was that when a man was most in doubt about his estate or condition, those about him could be most certain of his regeneration.[1]

In seeking to cure the wounds of the conscience and to strengthen faith, care must be exercised not to encourage "presumption, and hinder either the exercise of repentance or doing diligence in following duties." On the other hand, "we must take heed lest we press the exercise of repentance, as it were out of our own strength, or the practice of duties, so as we hinder the exercise of faith in Christ."[2]

Role of the "Pastor or Prudent Friend" in the Resolution of Doubts in the Regenerate Man.- In dealing with a troubled conscience, the comforter, whether a pastor or prudent friend,[3] must not trust his own ability, or take upon himself more than his share, "but let him keep his eye upon the Lord and in his heart be praying to God to bless the Word in his mouth." If, after his application of the Word of comfort, he perceives the

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[1]Pp. 215ff. [2]P. 226.

[3]Up to this point, Dickson has referred to "the pastor" as the person to whom the therapy has been entrusted. However, at this point the book turns from a consideration of how regeneration may be brought about to counselling of the regenerate.

afflicted to respond to the treatment and lift his eyes to the Lord, he must expressly give the glory to God. He must not take to himself, the instrument, that which is due to God, the craftsman who uses the instrument as he sees fit. The minister has been called to sow the seed and plant and water, but God only can give the increase.[1]

The sufferers from this type of doubt have become aware of their sinfulness, have fled to Christ, and are trying to mend their lives. The difficulty is that their belief is weak. This weakness makes them "fear they are not, or shall not be admitted into that kingdom of our Lord Jesus." The pastor's purpose in dealing with them should be to strengthen their belief, rather than to offer the external means whereby they may be regenerated. For a general strengthening of weak believers before answering specific doubts, Dickson recommended the application of two passages of scripture. In II Corinthians 5:19, he advised, Paul has summed up the whole Gospel in a few words. The fulness of the Trinity was in the Mediator Christ Jesus and is now about the work of reconciling the world unto Himself, through the offer of Himself in the Gospel. God in Christ has committed the Word of reconciliation to His ministers, "that they, with authority, may offer reconciliation and friendship with God unto the hearers of the Word of the Gospel." The ministers, therefore, are sent forth as ambassadors, "to exhort and request men," on behalf of God and Christ, to be reconciled unto God.[2] All

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[1] P. 234.

[2] Pp. 235f.

those that "welcome the message of reconciliation...and do engage themselves to hold fast this Covenant," intending to lead a new life as reconciled children and resolving to lay their burdens and desires daily upon the Lord, may be assured that they are reconciled. Dickson was certain that regenerate men would heartily accept this assurance, to the relief of their consciences.[1] The second passage of scripture to be used by the pastor is I Corinthians 1:30, in which are promised to the believer, the unsearchable riches of Christ, "whereunto the weakest believer, fled from sin and wrath unto Christ, as the refuge and perfect remedy from both, may claim, namely wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."[2] Use of this passage would encourage, Dickson believed, the weak believer to greater hope.

Doubts of the Regenerate Man as to His Estate.- The pastor's assistance may be required to answer cases of conscience which may be found in the man who, after regeneration, begins to question whether he is in a state of grace or a state of nature. Essentially, these doubts could be considered to be whether one is elect or reprobate. Although Dickson's analyses of and treatments recommended for these cases are often complex, the principal ideas only will be presented here.

<u>That He is not Elect at All</u>.- A desperate doubt may arise in the regenerate man who feels that he may be among the reprobate rather than the elect. "For cure of this case,

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[1] P. 237. [2] Ibid.

the Pastor or prudent friend...must seriously pray to God, that he would bless the means of information and consolation," which he is to use to settle the doubts of the afflicted. First, said Dickson, let all the reasons whereby the afflicted has been convinced that his reprobation is probable be stated and refuted as frivolous. Dickson argued that it would be impossible to determine reprobation, "because God hath not given any certain evidence or sign of reprobation, so long as a man is alive, except that sin unto death, the sin against the holy Ghost, in a malicious refusing, rejecting and hostile opposing of Jesus Christ wittingly and willingly." No man can be sentenced to final unbelief and impenitency, for God, as in the case of the thief on the cross, may convert a soul to himself just before death. The fact that the sufferer has become aware of his guilt and his need is a certain sign that he has made the first step to salvation.[1]

That He Is Unworthy of Election.- Sometimes, according to Dickson, doubts arise in the regenerate man because he feels unworthy of regeneration or election. With such sufferers, a pastor or prudent friend must deal with them as if they were infirm and thought themselves not converted, because the same treatment "will serve to strengthen a weak believer and to draw a soul, sensible of sin, and under the pangs of the new birth, unto faith in Christ." The sufferer must be reminded that the promises of the Gospel are for the poor in spirit and

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[1]Pp. 250ff.

for those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. His attitude must be the same as that of the centurion[1] who said he was not worthy that Christ should come under his roof, but that Christ could say the Word and his servant would be healed. The same Word would suffice for the man suffering from these doubts. Dickson contended that the Word so sought after was readily available, being frequently stated in scripture. On that Word, said Dickson, the sufferer should rest himself.[2]

That He Is Guilty of Many Sins.- Doubts also arise from the regenerate man's recognition of the multitude and weight of his sins. To be cured of this ailment of the conscience, he must confess his sins, humble himself, and "make use of the offer of grace in the Gospel." It is to be noted that there is no hint of auricular confession here. The confession is, as are the other processes involved, internal, within the man's conscience.[3]

That He Has No Power to Believe in Christ.- The regenerate man sometime doubts his state of grace because he has no power to believe in Christ. For the cure of this case, the afflicted man must realize that he has depended too much on his own strength and ability to believe. According to Dickson, what he really is saying is that he cannot find such a full assurance of faith as he would like. He must be taught the difference between believing in Christ and knowing that he believes in Him.

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[1]Luke 7:6f. [2]Pp. 241ff. [3]Pp. 245ff.

Dickson explained that true saving faith is in the person who, "being convinced of his enmity against God, doth answer the request of God in Christ, in the mouth of his Ministers, with a hearty consent unto the covenant of grace and reconciliation offered to all that hear the Gospel."[1]

That His Humiliation and Sorrow for Sin Are Defective.- When doubts arise from apprehended defect in the sufferer's humiliation and sorrow for sin, Dickson held that he must be exhorted not to linger any more but to fly to Christ, who came to call sinners to repentance. The sense of sin and misery shown by the doubter is an indication that his eyes are being opened to the riches to be found in Christ.[2]

That His Righteousness Does not Exceed That of the Scribes and Pharisees.- When the regenerate man worries because his righteousness does not exceed that of the scribes and pharisees, severe consequences will follow, Dickson said, unless the disease is quickly cured. The afflicted's concern about his imperfections must be admitted and confirmed by the counsellor, so that the former will be humbled in the sight of God. Then he must be shown the imputed righteousness of Christ, and exhorted to embrace it. When the pastor or prudent friend sees the man convinced of his mistake, and intending to bring forth the good fruits promised the believer by Christ, he should compare the righteousness of the penitent believer in Christ with that of

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[1]Pp. 253ff.

[2]Pp. 257ff.

the scribes and pharisees. The afflicted man will see, said Dickson, that the imputed righteousness of the weak Christian far exceeds that of the scribes and pharisees.[1]

Unquietness of Spirit.- Doubts arise from the regenerate man's unquietness of spirit. This problem is complicated and presupposes, according to Dickson, first, that he feels a serious sense of sin and has a purpose to do better, together with a sincere embracing of the covenanttof grace and reconciliation in Christ Jesus. Finally, it is presupposed that he is making an honest, but weak, endeavor to bring forth the fruits of new obedience. This sort of case is to be found, said Dickson, mostly in adversity. The afflicted should be urged to continue in his calling, "looking to the promises made to him by Him that endureth to the end."[2]

Uncertainty as to What Time He Was Converted.- If a man doubts his election because he does not know for certain at what time he was converted, he must be told that "it matters not at what time he was converted, provided he be indeed regenerated and made a new creature." If he follows the pattern of humiliation, faith, and new obedience prescribed for the elect, it does not matter when he was converted.[3]

That His Change of Life Was not from the Sincere Love of God but either from Terror or Self-love.- It is possible for the regenerate man, Dickson held, to doubt his regeneration

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[1]Pp. 263ff. [2]Pp. 274ff. [3]Pp. 287ff.

because the beginning of his conversion came not so much from pure love of God, as from terror or selfishness, either of which might be interpreted as aiming at prolonging and making more enjoyable temporal life. Dickson granted that there are many who, "after some notable delivery from death, or some notable benefit received, or after some sharp rod of chastisement for their sin," have changed their outward way of life, giving up great vices and leading a more civil and blameless life, but who neither understand their own sin nor accept the grace offered in the Gospel. Such men are unregenerate and require to be brought to regeneration. Others, under the same circumstances have been humiliated by their sin, fled to Christ, and have tried to perform a new obedience. Still, they doubt their conversion because of the possibly improper motives or impulse from which it took effect. The pastor, said Dickson, must answer that it is immaterial from what source or by what means a man came to Christ, "provided he doth come and indeed adhere to Christ." Whatever happened was God's means of calling him. The afflicted must be urged to remember those who came to Christ for healing, then adhered to him by faith. Instead of doubting, the afflicted should use his exertions to strengthen his faith, Dickson advised, and to increase in holiness and, by well-doing, make his calling and election sure.[1]

Heavy Afflictions and Grievous Temptations.- The regenerate man may doubt his election if he suffers under

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[1]Pp. 294.

heavy afflictions and strong temptations. The solution of this doubt is difficult, Dickson observed, because the evidence presented by the cause of the doubt is inconclusive. On the one hand, afflictions and temptations are not proper to the regenerate man, nor are they a sign of regeneration. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the true converts often suffer all sorts of calamities. Even Paul was buffeted by circumstances. These troubles prove neither love nor hate for the individual on the part of God. The afflicted man, concluded Dickson, should be urged to use the occasion to feel more unworthy and to deepen his faith in Christ.[1]

From Feeling More Corrupt after Entering the New Life than He Did Before.- If the regenerate man feels that corruption has more power over him after turning to Christ than before, he should humble himself before God and acknowledge his natural inability to obey the law. Being thus humbled, "let him bless God, who of his free grace hath prepared and freely granted unto him a righteousness purchased by Christ." He should be advised to use the means provided by God for mortifying his sin and repairing the image of God in him, looking to Christ for renewed strength in the undertaking.[2]

From Comparison of Himself with the Unregenerate.- When doubts arise from the regenerate man's comparing himself with the hypocrite and the unregenerate, Dickson urged that

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[1]Pp. 298ff. [2]Pp. 304ff.

these fears must be turned into holy carefulness. The sufferer must be warned to be found "sincere and serious in the use of the Lords ordinances, lest Satan beguile them on the right hand or on the left." As Dickson evaluated the disease and its causes, the basic error was that the sufferer had presumed to judge others. Such judgement is impossible, since he can see only the present outward things. He must leave the judgement of others to God, but be concerned about himself. The more he sees and understands his own unworthiness, said Dickson, the more he should embrace Christ's offer.[1]

Because Some Godly Persons Look upon Him as an Hypocrite.- Some true converts, explained Dickson, do not consider themselves to be so, because some of their friends, who are most pious and whose judgement otherwise is highly respected, "not only suspect them to be hypocrites, but by words spoken of them and behaviour toward them, declare their judgement of them." This, declared Dickson, is a common strategem of Satan, an example of which may be seen in the case of Job. In case of the occurance of this disease of the conscience, the afflicted must be instructed to be more harsh in his self-examination and to make his flight to Christ more certain. He should repent, humble himself, and turn to Christ, that in Him he may have newness of life.[2]

Because He Does not Feel the Sense of His Reconciliation with God.- When the regenerate man doubts his election

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[1]Pp. 311f.

[2]Pp. 313ff.

because he could not feel a sense of his reconciliation with God, Dickson contended that two diseases of the conscience were really present. First, the sufferer was trying to live by sense rather than by faith. In the second place, he did not understand the nature of saving graces and how they are acquired, in that he expected only the full achievement of such graces. Positively, Dickson declared that the afflicted should be commended for being dissatisfied with half-measures. He should walk by faith, conscious of his own unworthiness, but holding fast the covenant of grace. He must be taught to distinguish between faith and a sense of joy.[1]

Because He Does not Grow in Grace through Use of God's Ordinances.- A regenerate man may doubt his regeneration because he does not seem to himself to grow in grace by use of the means appointed for his growth. He says, Dickson concludes, "I grow not in the knowledge of things spiritual; my faith does not grow by hearing nor reading the Word of God, nor by meditation on it; I do not prevail in wrestling against inbred sin and corrupt nature, neither by prayer nor fasting." Therefore, the sufferer assumes that he must not be converted. One cause of his condition may be, Dickson said, that in the application of the means, he finds his eyes more and more opened to his natural corruption. ~~Too,~~ He may feel that there is some merit in his own efforts in connection with the divinely appointed and executed means of his regeneration. To cure this disease, said

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[1] Pp. 316ff.

Dickson, the afflicted must be urged to continue in the ordinances, being careful to detect the slightest benefit, from which he will progress. He should humble himself before Christ as, through the ordinances, he becomes more aware of his sinfulness. Above all, if the means appointed do not soon improve him, he must hold faster to the covenant of grace and to Christ.[1] By "ordinances" and "means" Dickson meant, especially, the preaching of the Word.

Doubts of the Regenerate Man about His Condition.- Having dealt with diseases of the conscience that inhibit regeneration and those connected with doubts concerning the regenerate man's election or reprobation, Dickson took up, as the last section of his casuistry, cases of conscience concerning the condition of the regenerate man. The condition of a man, according to Dickson, "is his present moral disposition in order to his exercising of virtue or vice, better or worse."[2] That is to say, a man in a good condition goes about the duties of religion and righteousness as becomes a renewed man. In an ill condition, his actions are temporally oriented. Condition might be described as the resultant of the forces of God, Satan, corrupt nature, and the new creature acting upon a man's performance of moral and religious duties. Condition varies between good and ill depending on which forces are most powerful at the moment. When a person suffers from an ill condition, the conscience may be able to give a correct diagnosis. In which case, the afflic-

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[1] Pp. 320ff.

[2] P. 377.

ted should acknowledge his sin and corruption, deepen his faith, and ask Christ's direction of his heart and ways so that he may bring forth good fruits. The conscience, however, may incorrectly judge its own ill condition, by taking an ill condition to be good; judging a good condition to be altogether bad - or worse than it is; not distinguishing the good or ill in a condition partly good and partly evil; or finding itself unable to judge the condition definitely.[1] Dickson explained the treatment for the following specific diseases involving a man's condition.

Those Who Have Fallen from Their First Love.- The conscience, Dickson said, may incorrectly judge its own ill condition by taking an ill condition to be good. Such a case is that arising from the regenerate man's falling away, like the church at Ephesus,[2] from the intensity of the love he had at his conversion. Sometimes, the man realizes that his love for Christ has cooled internally, but continues to bring forth fruits of new obedience. Other times, it happens that the renewed man contents himself with the "seal of the holy Spirit and the consolation which once he felt" and either does not observe the cooling of his love or does not concern himself over it. He is not disturbed, but thinks his condition is sufficient to carry a converted man to heaven. This condition must be soon corrected or the external bringing forth of fruits will fall away, too, Dickson declared. For the cure of this disease of the con-

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[1]P. 382.

[2]Revelation 2:2.

science, "it is needful for the man, being convinced of his fault," to consider how reasonable it is for him to return to the first strength of his love and how useful and profitable such first love is to all Christians. He must remember the felicity he felt in his old love and the loss he has suffered of spiritual comforts since his love diminished.[1] The major task of the ministry here is to make the man aware of his condition.

A change in Dickson's style was noted here. In discussing those cases of conscience which could prevent regeneration, Dickson invariably spoke of the course to be followed by the pastor in treating and curing the disease. In the second book, when he discussed the treatment of those cases involving doubts as to the estate of the regenerate man, he referred to the work of the pastor or prudent friend. In this third book, he mentioned neither pastor nor prudent friend. For example, in his discussion of the treatment of the particular disease of the conscience just described, Dickson said simply that, for the case to be cured, it was needful for the man involved to consider certain arguments. Since the diseased conscience would be unlikely to present these arguments to itself, the change is considered to be more literary than ecclesiastical, It is probable that Dickson assumed these arguments would be presented by a pastor or prudent friend.

Suspicion that His Aiming at Circumspect Walking May be Thought Scrupulosity.- Another type of case of conscience

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[1]Pp. 38ff.

concerning condition is that in which the conscience incorrectly judges its own ill condition by taking a good condition to be altogether bad or worse than it is. An example of this type is the afflicted man's fear that his circumspect behavior will be misunderstood. The practical result of this doubt is that he relaxes his intention to follow closely the commandments, excusing himself with three pretended reasons: (1) he feels that it is impossible to conduct oneself as one should, (2) that too close attention to behavior interferes with the peace promised him in the Gospel, and (3) that it restrains his Christian liberty.

This case, Dickson urged, must be cured rapidly and the man's intention to follow the law quickly restored. Otherwise, it is possible that his whole resolution to bring forth fruits of new obedience may be lost, "for, if a chink be opened here in the vessel for the least entry of water, it may...sink the whole ship." The cure recommended by Dickson is the explanation to the afflicted of the fallacies in his reasoning. In answer to the first pretended reason, Dickson insisted that it is not the Christian's responsibility to give perfect obedience unto the law, but to endeavor, according to the measure of grace given, to obey the law perfectly. When God, through conversion, loosed the sinner from the law, He bound him to obedience to the Lawgiver. He listed six reasons for the Christian to strive to give perfect obedience to the rule of God, the chief of which was that thus the Christian would bear witness of his desire to serve God with all his heart. To the objection that circumspect

walking disturbs the peace of the conscience by bringing to consciousness infractions of the law, Dickson answered that the conscience is really helped, because if the sufferer will do his best to follow God in Christ, he will be assured that he is beyond the reach of condemnation, walking not after the flesh, but after the spirit. In answer to the third reason, that Christian liberty is restrained, Dickson says that it is only through the effort to follow Christ that Christian freedom is found.[1]

Summary.- Therapeutica Sacra and the university divinity lectures upon which the book was based represent the effort of Dickson as a mature and experienced professor to provide the beginning minister with the theory and technique of pastoral care through the private ministry of the Word. The book benefits from Dickson's experience as an outstanding parish minister, an indefatigable expositor of the scripture, and a champion for the theology of the Westminster Assembly. An earlier stage in his development is represented by the book described below.

The True Comfort of a Christian.- The True Comfort of a Christian or Food for a Distressed Soul,[2] a little known 12mo volume of only fifty pages, was written by Dickson while minister at Irvine and dealt with cases similar to the ones handled in Therapertica Sacra. Unlike the later treatise, The True Comfort of a Christian is directed to the individual Christian

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[1]Pp. 456ff.

[2]Edinburgh: James Watson, 1718.

for private use. From the practical standpoint, the major difference between the books is that the casuistical manual of the earlier book consisted not of detailed instructions for treatment of the disease, but a tabulation of situations in which the individual might need pastoral care together with scripture passages which would supply the Word required for cure of that particular ill.

Dickson began by explaining in traditional terms[1] the covenants of works and grace. The treatment of spiritual ills was accomplished by the proper application of the covenant of grace, the procedure for which he explained as follows:

> It rests only to make use of this covenant in all thy life, that thou mayest live the life of faith, and Christ may live in thee; and out of Christ, by virtue of his promise, thou mayest draw every grace which thy soul desireth: And to this end, look what necessary grace thou wouldst have: Search if there be a promise for it in the scriptures, wherein the heads of the covenant are written. Labour to believe humbly the promise when thou hast found it, and in that measure of faith which the Lord bestoweth upon thee, present thy supplication in the Name of Jesus for that necessary promised grace... till God satisfy thee, which he will not fail to do in his own time.[2]

Dickson then listed seven deliverances and thirty-four promises that were covered by the covenant of grace.[3] The believer was assured by the covenant, for example, of deliverance from sin, the wrath of God, and spiritual plagues. Among the things promised to those who ratified the covenant of grace were repentance, righteousness, and sanctification. In order to make

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[1]The theology of this book will be discussed in the final chapter.

[2]P. 20.

[3]Full list is given in Appendix

the benefits of the covenant readily available to the reader, Dickson would propose a difficulty that the reader might be expected to undergo, then answered it from the scripture. Sometimes he felt it was sufficient to give only the scripture reference without comment. For example, the full discussion of the promise of deliverance from immoderate grief is, "Christ hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrow, Is. 53. v.4."[1] In most cases, however, he commented briefly upon the promise. For example, in discussing delivery from sin, he said:

> What evil would thou be delivered from? It is sin the worst of all evils, and the cause of all thy misery. The Lord shall largely satisfy thee in this point, and by his word shall assure thee that he will not forsake his people for all thine iniquities. Ps. 130. v.4...Is. 1. v.18; Is. 44. v.22; Jer. 33. v.8; Jer. 50. v.20; Ezek. 16. vs.1-10; Num. 23. v.21; Hos. 14. v.4; Zach. 13. v.1; Eph. 6. v.7; Ex. 28. v.37; Num. 18. v.1; Joh. 2. v.1; Micah 18 v.19; Is. 55. v.7; Jer. 3. v.1.[2]

The last ten pages of the book are devoted to a discussion, using the same technique, of Christian virtues. Dickson reassured his readers that if they are possessed of such virtues as fear of God, humility, and keeping the Sabbath, they are, indeed, enjoying receipt of the promises of Christ.[3] In contrast with Therapeutica Sacra which deals only with diseases of the conscience, Dickson in this work seeks not only the regeneration of the unregenerate and the uplifting of the believer in spiritual difficulty, but also encourages those who are, apparently, enjoying some degree of spiritual calm and are producing some evidence of the fruits of new obedience."

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[1]P. 25. [2]P. 21. [3]Pp. 41ff.

CHAPTER VI

THE PRIVATE MINISTRY OF THE WORD: PART II

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The Use of Letters

General.- The Word of God was ministered in the seventeenth century Church of Scotland not only through the methods described in Chapter V, but by the pastoral use of letters. Because of the lack of rapid transportation and long distance communication systems, separation of the minister and counsellee by extended business or other circumstances, the custom or preference of the minister, or for other reasons, much pastoral counselling in seventeenth century Scotland was undertaken by letter. Pastoral letters are especially important as a source of information on the technique of counselling in the period of study since so few records remain of "face to face" counselling sessions.

Samuel Rutherford.- The letters of Samuel Rutherford, of which over 350 are extant, provide extensive evidence of the method and content of his private ministry of the Word. Rutherford's letters span the period from 1627 to 1661 and record the pastoral care he offered in applying the Word of God to situations as diverse as the bestowal of civil honors and death.

Rutherford's pastoral counselling, as exhibited by his letters, was based on a sympathetic understanding of the sensitivities of the person being counselled. He began his letters

with the current circumstances of the addressee, using those temporal circumstances and concerns to gain access to the concerns of the soul. In his counselling, Rutherford sought, in concrete situations, to understand the temporal and relate it to the eternal. In general, Rutherford used personal witness, expressions of comfort or assurance, and exhortation to convey his pastoral message.

Illness.- Typical of Rutherford's approach to the needs of his correspondents was his message concerning illness. When the Viscountess Kenmuir became ill in 1628, he wrote, "I have heard of your Ladyship's infirmity and sickness with grief; yet I trust ye have learned to say, 'It is the Lord, let him do whatever seemeth good in his eyes.'" The Lord, he assured her, knew the limits of the body and would give each one of His children only what was needed - sickness as well as health.[1] Sickness was a gift from Christ, helpful to the Christian, he said, in that it made the infirm person more aware of his need for Christ and the dangers of being without Him.[2] To Marion M'Naught he explained, "You are not ignorant what our Lord in his love-visitation hath been doing with your soul, even letting you see a little sight of that dark trance you must go through ere you come to glory."[3] Rutherford emphasized the positive values of

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[1]Letters of Samuel Rutherford, ed. Andrew A. Bonar, Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, 1891, ltr. III, p. 37. Except as noted, all references to the letters are from this edition.

[2]Ltr. CXXV, p. 249.

[3]Ltr. XXVI, p. 83.

illness when he wrote Lady Kenmuir during another illness in 1640, "I am a little moved at your infirmity of body and health; I hope it is to you a real warning." Several times, Rutherford seemed convinced that Lady Kenmuir was dying, although it happened that she survived him by at least eleven years. In 1656, he suggested to her that she was dying and said that he hoped she was looking forward to the opportunity of praising God more than time on earth allowed. Her death, he lamented, would be a loss to many, but she herself would know only gain.[1] Illness, as Rutherford understood it and advised his addressees, was no accident or misfortune, in spite of the pain and distress involved. In illness, the Lord sought and achieved only good for those who bore the disease. In the same way, recovery from illness, he said, was not just good fortune. Recovery, he said, was an honor, not a comfort.[2] an opportunity for the Christian warrior to put on his armor again and return to the fight for righteousness.[3]

Death,- To the dying, Rutherford held forth the promise of life far superior to that already experienced, and reassured them of Christ's care in their time of transition. When it seemed that Lady Kilconqhuair was dying, Rutherford wrote:

> I am glad to hear that you have your face homeward towards your Father's house, now when so many are for a home nearer hand: but you Lord calleth you to another life and glory, than is to be found hereaway: and therefore I would counsel you to make sure the charters and rights, which ye have to salvation.[4]

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[1]Ltr. CCCXLV, p. 680.

[2]Ltr. CCCXXXVI, p. 665.

[3]Ltr. CXXV, p. 249.

[4]Ltr. CCXXVI, p. 445.

When his friend George Gillespie, minister of St. Giles, was dying, he wrote, "I fear the clay house is ataking down and undermining, but it is nigh the dawning, look to the East, the dawning of glory is near; your guide is good company."[1] James Durham of Glasgow was told that his own preaching contained the comfort a dying person might need. The keys to death, he reminded Durham, are in the hands of God; "Who can persuade you to die or live, as if that were arbitrary to us, and not His alone who hath determined the number of your months?"[2] Of Rutherford's views on life after death, more will be said below.

To the bereaved, Rutherford sent messages showing the essentially sympathetic quality of his pastoral counselling and his ability to grasp the reality of the situations to which he ministered. He began a letter to a Christian friend after the death of the latter's wife, "I desire to suffer with you in the loss of a loving and good wife, now gone before (according to the method and order of Him of whose understanding there is no searching out) whither ye are to follow."[3] When David Dickson's son died, Rutherford wrote, "I desire to suffer with you, if I could take a lift of your house-trial off you." When a wife lost her husband, he wrote that he could not but "rejoice, and withall be grieved" at her case. The Lord, he explained, had taken her husband to an early rest, "but shall we be sorry, that our loss is his gain?"[4] Rutherford compared the grief of the bereft with being cast into a fiery furnace, but reminded them

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[1]Ltr. CCCXXIV, p. 644.

[2]Ltr. CCCLI, p. 685.

[3]Ltr. CCCXV, p. 629.

[4]Ltr. CV, p. 217.

of the Hebrew children and said that they should be glad "to walk in the fiery furnace with one like unto the Son of Man."[1] Although the language may be explained in terms of poetry and allegory, Rutherford's comforting of Lady Kenmuir after the death of her husband is considered to be in poor taste:

> I trust your Lord shall...give you comfort now at such a time as this, wherein your dearest Lord hath made you a free woman for Christ, who is now suiting for marriage-love of you. And therefore, since you lie alone in your bed, let Christ be as a bundle of myrrh, to sleep and lie all night betwixt your breasts (Cant. 1.13), and then your bed is better filled than before.[2]

Comfort more solid, scripturally and theologically is that offered David Dickson:

> Dearest brother, go on, and faint not. Something of yours is in heaven, beside the flesh of you exalted Saviour; and ye go on after your own. Time's thread is shorter by one inch than it was. An oath is sworn and past the seals, whether afflictions will or not, ye must grow, and swell out of your shell, and live, and triumph, and reign, and be more than a conqueror. For you Captain, who leadeth you on, is more than conqueror, and He maketh you partaker of His conquest and victory.[3]

Essentially, Rutherford's message to the bereaved was that although we are unable to understand it, death is an expression of Christ's love. The love is simply obscured by the veil of our ignorance, "But Christ's love under a veil is love," even though we may not recognize it.[4]

Imprisonment.- Rutherford sought to inspire, as well as to comfort those who were imprisoned for the cause of the Church. It

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[1]Ltr. II, p. 34.

[2]Ltr. XXXVII, p. 100.

[3]Ltr. CCXCVIII, p. 603.

[4]Joshua Redivivus or Mr. Rutherfoord's Letters, n.p; (By a wellwisher to the work and people of God), 1664, p. 56f.

is probable that Rutherford's concern for those who languished in prison was heightened by his own confinement to the city of Aberdeen. In 1639, after his translation to St. Andrews, Rutherford wrote to Alexander Leighton of London, maimed and long imprisoned for his adherance to the Presbyterian cause:

> Worthy Sir, I hope that I need not exhort you to go on in hoping for the salvation of God. There hath not been so much taken from your time of ease and created joys, as eternity shall add to your heaven. Ye know when one day in heaven hath paid you (yea, and overpaid your blood, bonds, sorrow, and sufferings), that it would trouble angels' understanding to lay the count of that surplus of glory which eternity can and will give you.[1]

The Lord's purpose, said Rutherford, in seeing Leighton imprisoned and disfigured for his faith was to increase his reward in heaven.[2] Henry Stuart, his wife, and two daughters, all imprisoned in Dublin, were told how fortunate they were to receive "the crown of that royal Lord" for their witnessing to the saving truth.[3] When the first Presbyterian prisoners were placed in Edinburgh castle in 1660, Rutherford urged them to use their imprisonment as an opportunity for witnessing to their faith.[4] Imprisonment, held Rutherford, is like a receipt issued for reward to be received in heaven.

Material Difficulties.- Rutherford counselled in cases of loss of property or other material hardship that such discomfort had the benefit of directing the mind and energies towards eternal

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[1]Ltr. CCLXXXIX, p. 586. [2]Ibid. pp. 575f.

[3]Ltr. CCXCI, p. 581. [4]Ltr. CCCLVII, pp. 693f.

rather than temporal considerations. When Alexander Gordon of Knockgray suffered the loss of some property, he wrote, "Our husband doeth well in breaking our idols in pieces: dry wells send us to the fountain."[1] Rutherford, in a later letter to the same man, recognized the difficulty of accepting material reverses. He wrote:

> I find it hard work to believe when the course of providence goeth cross-wise to our faith, and when misted souls in a dark night cannot know east by west, and our sea-compass seemeth to fail us. Every man is a believer in daylight: a fair day seemeth to be made all of faith and hope. What a trial of gold it is to smoke it a little above the fire! and to be turned from vessel to vessel, and yet to cause our furnace to sound, and speak, and cry the praises of the Lord is another matter.[2]

When the plans of John Stuart, a former provost of Ayr, to emigrate to New England were frustrated, Rutherford's letter recognized the man's severe disappointment and assured him that his experience was an expression of God's care for him. "It is no dumb providence but a speaking one," was the way he expressed it,[3]

Cases of Conscience.- Letters were sent to Rutherford asking him to resolve cases of conscience. For example, in 1637, when Rutherford was in Aberdeen, Lady Kenmuir wrote him proposing six "scruples" for which answers were sought,[4] while James Bautie required answers to eleven doubts.[5] About the same time, Lady Boyd also wrote. She was worried, fearing her life was not such

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[1]Ltr. CLIV, p. 286.

[2]Ltr. CCXXIII, p. 434.

[3]Ltr. CLXI, p. 298.

[4]Ltr. CVI, pp. 219ff.

[5]Ltr. CCXLIX, pp. 489ff.

as would justify salvation. Rutherford assured her that he was glad she was worried about her unworthiness, for Christ "is content that ye lay broken arms and legs on His knee, that He may spelk[1] them." She was concerned, too, because she did not enjoy a feeling of Christ's presence with her. "Hiding of His face is wise love," wrote Rutherford, for it requires winter weather to rot our pride.[2] Unless pride is destroyed, there can be no salvation. William Rigge of Athernie wrote to him complaining of his guilt. Rutherford replied, "Whatever your guiltiness be, yet, when it falleth into the sea of God's mercy, it is but like a drop of blood fallen into the great ocean. There is nothing to be done, but to let Christ's doom light on 'the old man.'" In other words, when a man's conscience is bothered by his guilt, he should freely confess it to God and let it be swallowed up by the grace of Christ.[3]

Situations not Involving Distress.- Rutherford did not restrict his pastoral care through the interpretation of the landmarks of life to those events, such as illness, involving distress or hardship. He applied the Word of God to the gracious happenings as well, seeking to explain the happinesses as well as the sadnesses of our existence as due directly to the activity of God and as a part of His plan for each person. When John Kennedy escaped a shipwreck, Rutherford told him that "your armour was not think enough against the stroke of death." God had yet

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[1]"Splint," ltr. CVII, p. 220. [2]Ibid.

[3]Ltr. CCLVI, p. 501.

spared his life, he was told, in order to allow time for him to prepare for life eternal.[1] When news of the approaching marriage of Marion M'Naught's daughter reached Rutherford, he wrote the girl's mother, "It is a new world she entereth into, and therefore she hath need of new acquaintance with the Son of God, and of a renewing of her love to Him, whose love is better than wine."[2]

Successes or good works were also occasions for Rutherford's pastoral attention. On March 9, 1637, he wrote to Alexander Henderson, congratulating him on his ecclesiastical prominence and his many successes, but warning him to seek only lasting values.[3] He wrote letters of assurance to the Earls of Cassillis[4] and Loudon,[5] commending their efforts on behalf of the Reformed Church.

General Exhortation.- Rutherford wrote many letters not as pastoral guidance in a specific situation, but, in the manner of the classical παραίνεσις , exhorting the recipient to follow a general pattern of attitude and behavior. Although letter VII, to Lady Kenmuir, is of this type and is expressed in exquisite language, possibly the finest example of a letter of general exhortation is letter CLXIV, addressed to Ninian Mure, a young man:

> Loving friend, - I received your letter. I entreat you now, in the morning of your life, to seek the Lord and His face. Beware of the follies of dangerous youth, a perilous time for your soul. Love not the world.

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[1]Ltr. II, p. 75.

[2]Ltr. CCXLIV, p. 483.

[3]Ltr. CXV, pp. 233f.

[4]Ltr. CCLXVIII, p. 519.

[5]Ltr. CCLVIII, 507f.

> Keep faith and truth with all men in your covenants and bargains. Walk with God, for He seeth you. Do nothing but that which ye may and would do if your eye-strings were breaking, and your breath growing cold. Ye heard the truth of God from me, my dear heart, follow it, and forsake it not. Prize Christ and salvation above all the world. To live after the guise and course of the rest of the world will not bring you to heaven; without faith in Christ, and repentance, ye cannot see God. Take pains for salvation; press forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. If ye watch not against evils night and day, which beset you, ye will come behind. Beware of lying, swearing, uncleanness, and the rest of the works of the flesh; because "for these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." How sweet soever they may seem for the present, yet the end of these courses is the eternal wrath of God, and utter darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Grace be with you.[1]

Language.- Rutherford's letters of comfort and assurance, as well as of personal witness, often contain strong physical imagery describing the spiritual love of Christ which, he insisted, makes all other events and circumstances of little lasting importance. The two excerpts following are typical of this exotic language: "O how sweet is a fresh kiss from his holy mouth, his breathing that goeth before a kiss upon my poor soul, is sweet, and hath no fault, but that it is too short...."[2] "Sometimes while I have Christ in my arms, I fall asleep with the sweetness of his presence, and he in my sleep stealeth away out of my arms, and when I awake, I miss him."[3] It has also been observed that Rutherford depends more upon interpretation of the scripture or the force of theology for the impact of his pastoral message than upon the straightforward application of

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[1] Pp. 307f.

[2] Ibid., pp. 6f.

[2] 1664 Edition, p. 81.

the bare scripture. The language with which Rutherford expressed his pastoral care, therefore, is sharp contrast with the pastoral care intended to be achieved by Dickson's True Comfort of a Christian.[1]

Content.-

Good Works.- One of the questions arising from an examination of the letters of Samuel Rutherford is the place of "good works" in his pastoral message. Certainly, Rutherford fought in his theological works against the Arminians, but do his letters show Rutherford advising his correspondents that man has some responsibility for his own salvation? James MacAdam he advised, "Contend for salvation. Your Master, Christ won heaven with strokes: it is a besieged castle; it must be taken with violence."[2] To Janet Kennedy he wrote it was not possible to keep hold of Christ without fighting, until the devil dies. "It must be your resolution, he said, "to set your face against Satan's northern tempests and storms, for salvation."[3] From these and many other similar passages it is clear that Rutherford believed that it was necessary for man to struggle for his salvation. However, Rutherford saw the struggles resulting not from man's initiative and the outcome of the struggles independent of man's ability. He explained, in fact, that the best intentions are worthless unless brought to fulfillment by Christ. A man trying to win the struggle for faith and salvation with his own power

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[1]See above, pp. 232ff.

[2]Ltr. CXLI, p. 271.

[3]Ltr. LXXXVIII, pp. 185f.

he likened to "one stupefied with cold under the water, that would fain come to land, but cannot grip anything casten to him."[1] Rutherford, therefore, affirmed that the word necessary to salvation was altogether performed by Christ.

View of the World.- From Rutherford's descriptions of the world, it would seem that he considered it of no value. "I would not," he declared, "give a drink of water for this clay-idol, this plastered world."[2] Even if the world could be vastly improved, he argued, it would still be worth little. "I think that this world, at its prime and perfection, when it is come to the top of its excellency and to the bloom, might be bought with an half-penny; and that it would scarce weigh the worth of a drink of water."[3] In fact, the world was not just worthless, it was a disadvantage to the Christian, "an ill-made bed" where the soul could find no rest.[4] Rutherford expressed the wish to be free of the encumbrances of the world, "O that I could give up this clay-idol, this masked, painted, over-gilded dirt, that Adam's sons adore."[5]

Rutherford was constantly comparing the world with Christ, urging his correspondents to renounce the former that they might claim the latter. It was not surprising, he contended, that the elect had so much difficulty on earth. The world was the inheritance of the reprobates, and the elect, who had

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[1]Ltr. XCII, pp. 195f.

[2]Ltr. CXXXIX, 268.

[3]Ltr. CCXXIII, p. 435.

[4]Ltr. CCLXIV, p. 514.

[5]Ltr. CII, p. 212.

heaven and Christ as their portion, should let the reprobates contend among themselves for possession of the earth. He said, "I know now that this worm-eaten apple, the plastered rotten world, which the silly children of this world are beating and buffeting, and pulling each other's ears for, is a portion for bastards, good enough; and that is all they have to look for."[1] Because it pleased God to give Satan and the reprobates the temporal world as their inheritance, it followed that temporal life would be subject to considerable abuse.

View of Life.- The harshness of life, Rutherford counselled, was definitely to the advantage of the elect. It helped them choose Christ and reject the world. He advised Lady Kenmuir, "It is God's mercy to you, Madam, that he giveth you your fill, even to loathing, of this bitter world, that ye may willingly leave it, and like a full and satisfied banqueter, long for the drawing of the table."[2] More important, life, he affirmed, is the school in which we are trained up to be heirs to God. He described the curriculum of life as follows, "Now, the form of His bringing up was by chastisements, scourging, correcting, nursing; and see if he maketh exception of any of His bairns: no, His eldest Son and His Heir, Jesus, is not excepted."[3] The reason, Rutherford explained, for our failure to understand the value of naturally unpleasant temporal life is that we expect this life to be like life in heaven. He argued that one heaven

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[1]Ltr. CXI, p. 227.

[2]Ltr. XIX, p. 67.

[3]Ltr. XXII, pp. 75f.

was enough for Christ, therefore we must be content to proceed first through earth, instead of a first heaven, in order to join Christ eternally.[1] In short, he believed and taught that the chief purpose of human life was the preparation for and initiation into eternal life. He told Lady Kilconquhar, "You came to this life about a necessary and weighty business, to tryste with Christ anent your precious soul, and the eternal salvation of it."[2]

The Pastoral Relationship.- Rutherford's orientation in the writing of these pastoral letters of testimony, comfort and exhortation is best expressed by an excerpt from a letter written in 1636 to his parish. "Ye are in my prayers night and day. I cannot forget you: I do not eat, I do not drink, but I pray for you all: I entreat you all and every one of you to pray for me."[3]

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[1]Ltr. LXXXI, pp. 169f.

[2]Ltr. CCXXVI, p. 445.

[3]1664 edition, p. 300.

CHAPTER VII

CATECHISING AS A MEANS OF PASTORAL CARE

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General

The catechising of his parishioners, especially the young, was specified as a duty of the Scottish ministry from the Reformation onward. In the Book of Discipline, one of the duties specified for the ministry is instruction of the simple.[1] The General Assembly directed that close inspection be made of the minister's attention to catechising.[2] The emphasis on this responsibility was, whenever the duties of the ministry were described, restated by both Presbyterian and Episcopal writers throughout the seventeenth century.[3] Just at the close of the period of study, Henry Scougal gave as the three major tasks of the ministry catechising, preaching, and discipline.[4]

The Church described catechising as "the plain laying down of the oracles of God...or of the doctrine of Christ,"[5] the design of which "is to instruct persons in the whole scheme of religion."[6] Considerable latitude was allowed as to method and

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[1] iv.

[2] BUKS, p. 517.

[3] Anderson, op. cit., p. 97.

[4] Works, pp. 209f.

[5] Westminster "Form of Church Government," p. 173; George Gillespie, An Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland, n.p., 1641, p. 3.

[6] Alexander Gerard, The Pastoral Care, London: Cadell & Davies, 1799, p. 221.

content of catechetical instruction, but it was never intended that such training be a simple giving of answers by rote to questions not thoroughly understood by the catechumenate.[1] It is certain, however, that much catechesis of seventeenth century Scotland was far below the standard prescribed. In those parishes where more than rote memory was required of those undergoing instruction, the minister would be required to spend considerable time explaining the questions and answers. Many ministers prepared either special catechisms or supplementary materials to help their parishioners understand what they considered the essentials of the faith. Of these, the best known were David Dickson's Sum of Saving Knowledge and William Guthrie's Christian's Great Interest. Gilbert Burnet urged ministers to prepare a series of lectures filled with pithy illustrations explaining the whole of the catechism, word by word.[2]

In the scheme of pastoral care of the seventeenth century Church of Scotland, the teaching of the catechism served two purposes. It was a preparation for the reception of the Word through preaching and the sacraments and was, in itself, a method of communicating the Word of God.

Theory

Preparation for the Hearing of the Word.- There is little to indicate that the theoretical aspects of catechetics were consciously separated by seventeenth century Scots. It is most

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[1] Burnet, Discourse of the Pastoral Care, p. 152.

[2] Ibid., p. 154.

probable that they did not make such a precise distinction. The purpose of a catechism, in the design of the Reformers, was not to take the place of or to be a substitute for the Word of God communicated through preaching and the sacraments, but was, straightforwardly, to instruct the unlearned in fundamental Christian doctrine. Catechising was intended to give sufficient knowledge to enable, on the one hand, those who hear the Word of God through the understanding[1] and, on the other, those who see the Word of God, in the sacraments, to receive the Word therein, uncondemned by ignorance.[2] In the preface to his catechism of 1581, John Craig described its contents as "plain, simple, short, and profitable, not looking so much to the desire and satisfaction of the learned as to the instruction and help of the ignorant."[3] Neither was the catechism to provide materials for converting "profane atheists and apostates, but to put the brethren in memory of that doctrine which they daily hear confirmed (in our ordinary teaching) by the Scriptures."[4] The seventeenth century Scottish understanding of the need for catechising as an aid to reception of the preached Word, derived from the concept that in the ministry of the Word there were at work an external and an internal minister.[5] The external minister communicated the Word, pure Biblical doctrine, in external, intellectually apprehended forms. The Holy Spirit, the internal minister,

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[1]BOD, ix.

[2]Westminster "Directory for Public Worship," p. 152.

[3]Cited by Thomas F. Torrance, The School of Faith, London: James Clarke, 1959, p. 97.

[4]Ibid., p. 98.

[5]See above, pp. 7f.

through the external minister and under the form of the external message communicates the very Word of God in its purity and, working secretly in the heart of the hearer, brings about its ~~its~~ effectual reception in the elect.[1] Since the Word was communicated in preaching through intellectually transmitted external forms, it was held that no communication of the Word would be possible apart from reception through the understanding of the hearer. Catechising was designed to provide sufficient knowledge for the hearer to understand the doctrines expressed in the sermon. Therefore, catechising served as the means by which the Word contained in the message of the minister could be received and applied by the hearer. Petrie summarized this view of catechesis: "If a minister be remiss in Catechising, all his Sermons will be dashed to Pieces on the Rock of his People's Ignorance."[2]

Preparation for Participation in the Sacraments.- Based on the scriptural warning against eating the Lord's Supper unworthily,[3] the seventeenth century Scottish Church insisted that communicants possess, before admission to the sacrament, sufficient doctrinal knowledge to understand the significance of the sacrament.[4] It was necessary, first, that children be instructed in

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[1]Calvin, "Summary of Doctrine Concerning the Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments," sect. vi.

[2]Adam Petrie, "Rules of Good Deportment for Church Officers," The Works of Adam Petrie, The Scottish Chesterfield, Edinburgh: Scottish Literary Club, 1877, p. 40.

[3]I Corinthians 11:27ff.

[4]BOD, ix.

[5]Ibid.

the rudiments of the faith prior to their first admission to the Lord's Supper.[1] Examples of the type of instruction given children are found in the shorter catechisms of the century. Usually a catechism for children was bound into editions of the more complex catechisms for instruction of adults. The Little Catechism, taken from The Form of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments, etc. was bound into Scottish editions of the Geneva Catechism and the Heidelberg Catechism from 1564 to 1615. This catechism consisted of sixteen questions and answers and bore the sub-title, "The Manner to examine Children, before they are admitted to the Lord's Supper." The form alludes to the Creed, Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer, but does not contain them. The last five questions are in explanation of the sacraments. The Short Catechism which accompanies Craig's Catechism consists of ninety-six questions and answers, nearly half of which are intended to explain the significance of the sacraments. In the 1640's, two major catechisms for the instruction of children appeared in Scotland. In 1641, The A, B, C or A Catechism for young Children was adopted by the Church. Its organization was in the traditional form, following the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. It was an attempt to provide instruction suited to the capacities of young children and, in this respect, was more useful than the Westminster Shorter Catechism which replaced it in 1648. The Westminster Catechism was organized systematically, rather than traditionally, and was

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[1] Ibid.

designed not to fit the capacities of the child, but to provide what the child ought to know.[1] The influence of the Westminster Shorter Catechism beyond the seventeenth century has been remarkable. According to Torrance, it has shaped, more than any other document, "religious thought and temperament in Scotland" since its appearance.[2]

Not only were children to be instructed before first admission to the sacrament, but it was also necessary that each communicant be examined before each communion. The Book of Discipline required that celebration of the Lord's Supper should not take place until the congregation could be examined. The communion roll was to be gone through and the ignorant and scandalous debarred. The normal processes of kirk discipline determined those to be debarred for scandal, but the identification of the ignorant, who could not be allowed to profane the Lord's Table, was the special responsibility of the minister. The minister was to examine each member of the congregation, admitting only those whose knowledge was sufficient to qualify them. According to the Book of Discipline, admission was to be granted only to those who could "formally say the Lord's Prayer, the Articles of the Belief, and declare the sum of the Law."[3] In the seventeenth century, standards and enforcement varied widely, but knowledge of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer may be considered as the minimum required.[4] Where stan-

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[1]Torrance, op. cit., 5, 67, 97, 167, et al. [2]Ibid., p. 261.

[3]ix. [4]McMillan, op. cit., p. 224.

dards were low or enforcement lax, the efforts of a minister to increase the strictness of pre-communion examinations were seldom greeted with applause. The citizens of Aberdeen, in 1642, objected when Andrew Cant, after a period of comparatively free admission to the sacrament, declared the members of his congregation so ignorant that he postponed communion in order to catechise them.[1] Evidence indicates that pre-communion catechising and examination were widely practiced, but ministers were warned against confining their instruction to the period just before communion.[2]

Knowledge similar to that required for admission to the Lord's Supper was required of parents presenting children for baptism and, often, of couples seeking to be married.

Catechising as Communication of the Word.- The catechisms used by the seventeenth century Church of Scotland were never intended to be, in themselves, conveyances of the Word of God. They were rather intended, as explained above, to provide the hearer of the Word with the theology essential to intelligent reception of the Word in scripture, preaching, and the sacraments. Catechisms were "agreeable to the Word of God,"[3] but were not that Word. In the introduction to his volume of major Reformed catechisms, Torrance argues that these catechisms are teaching the Word of God, a form of "sacramental communication."[4] Catechesis

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[1] Edgar, op. cit., pp. 121f.

[2] Act of Assembly, 1639.

[3] Act of Assembly, 1648.

[4] Op. cit., xxii.

is not only an event of communication, Torrance suggests, but one also of reconciliation, "and with the transcendent operation of the Holy Spirit who enables man to receive truth beyond his natural powers, and so be lifted up above himself in communion with God."[1] He goes on to enumerate the seven general educational principles of "outstanding importance" in catechetical instruction and the seven particular principles which "derive from the very substance of the Christian faith."[2] That the catechisms in themselves could be an event of reconciliation never occurred to the authors.

That catechesis was not consciously regarded by the seventeenth century Church of Scotland as communication of the Word is testified by the catechisms themselves. In the section devoted to the Word and Sacraments, the Geneva Catechism identifies the Word of God, first, as the Holy Scriptures, but explains that reading and studying the scripture privately is neither sufficient worship of God nor the means whereby we may become His children and servants. Christ, it was insisted, has decreed that the only means of edifying and preserving the Church is through the preaching of the Word by the pastors of the Church. The members of the congregation should receive from the pastor, "the teaching of the Lord in humility." God not only communicates Himself through the preaching of the Word, but also through the sacraments.[3] There is nowhere any hint ~~that~~

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[1] Ibid., xxiii

[2] Ibid., xxivff.

[3] 300ff.

of an understanding that the Word is communicated through religious instruction.

The Heidelberg Catechism describes the Apostles Creed as the summary of "all that is promised us in the Gospel," and as that which is necessary for a Christian to believe.[1] This definition of the Creed, if taken out of context, could lead the reader to believe that the writers held that the Word was communicated through the Creed and, by implication, through the content of the catechism. It is explained, however, that faith, such as that expressed in the Creed comes from the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts through "the preaching of the holy Gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy Sacraments."[2] In other words, the concepts of the catechism do not communicate the Word of God, but the Word of God does communicate the concepts of the catechism. True faith is not only intellectual understanding of the truth God has revealed, but also a hearty trust in the merits of Christ alone.[3]

In Craig's Catechism the Word is described in traditional terms both as the scriptures and as preaching, and suggests that reading of the scriptures might be sufficient for salvation where public teaching is not available.[4] The New Catechism of 1644, like the Heidelberg Catechism, states that the sum of the Word of God is contained in the "Articles of the Belief"[5] or "Articles of Faith."[6] Although the Word is summarized in the

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[1] 22. [2] 67. [3] 21.

[4] Section 8 [5] 5. [6] 157.

Creed, the authors indicate that "the Word" must be equated with preaching. It is affirmed that we must be saved by faith in Christ, brought about in us by hearing of the Word. "What shall we do that we may obtain lively faith and true repentance?" it is asked. "We should pray continually that God would bless the Word and Sacraments to that end."[1] Again, there is no hint that the Word, although summarized in the Creed, can be communicated apart from the normal methods of the Church, especially through the ministry of the Word and sacraments.

The Larger Catechism of the Westminster Assembly defines, almost at its beginning, the Word of God as the scriptures, which "teach, what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of Man."[2] There can be no doubt but that the catechism was intended to teach precisely the same thing as the scriptures state. The scriptures and the catechism differ in that the former is of divine authorship[3] and the latter is based upon the former. The arguments of the catechisms were not considered sufficient in themselves, and early editions always carried "references to the proofs from the scripture."[4] Neither was catechising considered communication of the Word; this was what took place in the ministry of the Word. The covenant of grace is administered in the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments, it was said.[5] The elect are effectually called by the Word and Spirit of God, through the

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[1] 118. [2] 3, 5. [3] 4.

[4] Title page. [5] 35.

ministry of the Word.[1] To this end, the Spirit of God makes the preaching, and to a lesser extent the reading, of the Word by those "who are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office;"[2] an effectual means of "enlightening, convincing, and humbling sinners; of driving them out of themselves, and drawing them to Christ."[3] There is no hint that the Word is communicated by the catechism or in any other way except "the outward and ordinary means" prescribed by Christ.[4]

For each of the catechisms used by seventeenth century Scotland, in spite of diversity of emphasis and organization, Calvin's doctrine of the Word was a presupposition. In each catechism we find the conviction, brought froward from Calvin and permeating all seventeenth century religious thought in Scotland, that the Word can be communicated by no other means than the scriptures, preaching, and the sacraments.[5]

Yet, through the catechetical labors of the minister, the Word is communicated, sometimes more effectively than through the pulpit ministry. Gerard advises ministers that the "lower sort" will reap more benefit from half an hour of private instruction than from the sermons of a whole year.[6] The General Assembly, in 1649, in ordering ministers to order their questioning so that the people could "have the chief heads of saving knowledge in a short view presented unto them,"[7] certainly felt

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[1] 67f. [2] 158. [3] 155.

[4] WM Shorter Catechism, 88. [5] See above, pp. 6f.

[6] Op. cit., p. 116.

that the Word would be communicated to those undergoing instruction. If the position of the Church was that the Word could be communicated only through preaching or the sacraments, how could catechesis convey the Word? The Westminster "Form of Church Government" explained the transmission of the Word in catechesis by stating that catechising, "which is a plain laying down the first principles of the oracles of God, or of the doctrine of Christ...is a part of preaching."[1] In other words, the communication by the minister in catechising was not considered a part of catechesis, but of the ministry of the Word. When the catechetical labors of the minister became private preaching, ~~the~~ the Word was considered truly communicated in the process of catechising, but through the private ministry of the Word.

Catechisms Used

The principal catechisms used in seventeenth century Scotland were those contained in the collection by Torrance: The Geneva Catechism, The Heidelberg Catechism, Craig's Catechism, The New Catechism (1644), and the Westminster Larger Catechism. Shorter catechisms were The Little Catechism, of Geneva, Craig's Short Catechism, The A, B, C of 1641, and the Westminster Shorter Catechism.[2] In addition to these, large numbers of private catechisms appeared, both in England and Scotland. A. F. Mitchell has published several English catechisms and those of Samuel Rutherford and Thomas Wyllie, toge-

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[1] P. 173; Cf. Gillespie, op. cit., p. 3.

[2] Op. cit.

ther with a compilation of other catechisms of the century,[1]

It was complained that almost every minister had his own catechism. Dr. Forbes, in a sermon, said that Scotland in 1633 was like Judah in the time of Jeremiah: "According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah."[2] When the Act Recissory withdrew official approbation from the Westminster catechisms, no new catechism took its place. Leighton, in 1667, disliked both the length and variety of catechisms used in his diocese, arguing that lax and continually changing catechisms would deprive the people of "any fixed knowledge of the articles of religion." He suggested that the minister of the diocese present to the next synod several short catechisms, from which it might be possible to draft one for the use of the diocese, "till one shall be published for the whole church."[3] In 1683, the Synod of Aberdeen planned the preparation of a similar catechism,[4] but, so far as is known, neither diocesan nor national catechism appeared during the second Episcopacy.

Method

Catechetical practice varied greatly in seventeenth century Scotland. Weekly catechising was demanded by the acts of the Church.[5] The Book of Discipline required that on Sunday af-

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[1] Catechisms of the Second Reformation, London: James Nisbit, 1886.

[2] Cited by McMillan, op. cit., p. 134.

[3] Works, II, pp. 446f.

[4] Exercise of Alford, cited by Walter Roland Foster, Bishop and Presbytery, London: SPCK, 1958, p. 145.

[5] Act of Assembly, 1649.

ternoon the children of the parish were to be "examined publicly in their catechism in audience of the people, in doing whereof the Minister must take great diligence, as well to cause the people to understand" the questions posed, as well as the answers, "and the doctrine that may be collected thereof."[1] In many parishes, to Sunday diets of catechising were added weekday sessions. For example, the kirk session minutes of Glasgow show that weekly catechising was the practice of that parish through most of the century, but that the scheduling of instruction varied. In June 1592, the session decided that "examinations are to be made by the Ministers in the Sunday after noon." In June 1603, the session appointed, "considering the Ignorance of the inhabitants, that there be Examination once a week." No details as to the length of the session or the day of the week on which it was to be held were given. In July 1621, examination was to take place on Sundays from four to five in the afternoon. The session appointed, in November 1645, "two days catechising in the week, Monday and Friday, at Half 8 in the morning, in the New Kirk." A minute of September 1646 indicates that the weekly catechising was held on Monday. The first indication of how the instruction was to be conducted was given in August 1649, when it was prescribed that "the exposition to be hald an/ hour, and thereafter, examination." At this time catechising was conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In July 1653, there is mentioned examination on Sunday afternoon. Until 1660, the ministry was charged with the responsibility for catechesis. In April of

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[1]Knox, Works, II, pp. 238f.

that year, the session decided that "a part of the vacant stipend [should be paid] to some expectants, for examining the West Quarter by the advice of the Ministry."[1] Not always was the entire congregation expected to be present at "the catechise." Sometimes, a designated part of the congregation, usually an elder's quarter, was advised to be present.[2] In other parishes, a segment specially designated for catechesis was gathered in the church, or met with the minister in some suitable place within their bounds. In 1658, the session of Rothesay provided that the "landward part of the parish be divided into four quarters for examination, those in each quarter to meet at a special place in the same."[3] Some ministers catechised families in their homes,[4] but Richard Baxter insisted that no less than individual catechesis, "man by man," throughout the entire parish would meet the need for religious instruction.[5]

Responsibility

Most catechising of which records remain was performed by the ministry, but the responsibility for instructing the ignorant was not restricted to the ministry. Readers, in times and parishes where such were employed, often conducted the catc-

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[1]Wodrow, MS "Biography," III, pp. 16f.

[2]G. D. Henderson, Scottish Ruling Elder, p. 45.

[3]Edgar, op. cit. p. 94.

[4]James Gordon's Diary, 1692-1710, ed. G. D. Henderson and H. H. Porter, Aberdeen: Third Spalding Club, 1949, pp. 43, 45, 47, & 52.

[5]Baxter, op. cit., pp. 79, 144f.

chising of young children immediately preceding the afternoon sermon.[1] The eldership was, in an ill-defined way, to instruct the ignorant among those in their quarters.[2] Heads of households were expected to "strengthen the hands of the minister" by catechising his own household.[3]

Summary

In seventeenth century Scotland, catechising, or instruction of the young and ignorant in theological essentials, was an important part of pastoral care for two reasons. First, by providing the knowledge essential to an understanding of the doctrines expressed in preaching, those instructed were prepared to receive the Word of God through the external forms of the ministry of the Word. By teaching the meaning of the sacraments, catechesis allowed communicants and parents presenting children for baptism to obtain the comfort of those sacraments without profaning them by ignorance. Secondly, when the catechetical labors of the ministry became private preaching, the Word of God was communicated directly, in catechising, through the ministry of the Word. The minimum subject matter for catechising was the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. These were augmented throughout the century by many official and unofficial catechisms. Catechising was primarily the responsi-

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[1]McMillan, op. cit., p. 134.

[2]Gillespie, op. cit., p. 15; James Guthrie, op. cit., p. 50, Alexander Henderson, op. cit., p. 30.

[3]Diary of Alexander Jaffray, ed. John Barclay, London: Harvey & Darton, 1833, pp. 46, 81.

bility of the ministry and, although normally performed in weekly diets in the church, there are records of district, family, and individual catechesis.

CHAPTER VIII

OTHER PASTORAL DUTIES OF THE MINISTER

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Public Prayer

Theory.- Calvin taught that prayer is closely linked with the Word, "since faith is founded on the word, and is the parent of right prayer." When prayer becomes separated from the Word, "our prayers are impure."[1] For this reason, he felt that the prayer most suited to our needs and capabilities was the Lord's Prayer.[2] He understood public prayer to be a corporate expression of the heartfelt petitions of each worshipper, each of whom was responsible for his own participation in public prayer, glorifying God "together as it were with one voice and mouth."[3] The role of the minister in public prayer was to assist the people in framing their prayers "in so far as God has ordained them to be ministers and dispensers of His blessings, in order to assist us."[4] Calvin's influence on the public prayer of Scotland was more practical than theoretical. Although there is nothing inconsistent with Calvin's thought in the Scottish Reformation's understanding of prayer, a more direct influence can be found in the Scottish adoption of the form of prayers of

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[1] Institutes, III.xx.27. [2] Genevan Confession, xiii.

[3] Institutes, III.xx.28ff. [4] Geneva Catechism, 235f.

the Book of Geneva.

In the Church of Scotland, the minister was given the responsibility for offering prayers for the "people, and namely for the flock committed to his charge." The Second Book of Discipline explained that the responsibility for prayer, like that for preaching and administration of the sacraments, was a distinctive feature of the ministry of the Word.[1] It did not, however, specify how this responsibility should be put into practice. At the peak of Presbyterian power, following the signing of the National Covenant in 1638, authorities were uniform in reserving the offering of public prayer to the exclusive jurisdiction of the ministry of the Word. The Westminster "Form of Church Government" required that pastors pray for and with their flocks, "as the mouth of the people unto God," scriptural proof being adduced that "preaching and prayer are joined as several parts of the same office." Since a blessing is promised for the private prayers offered for the sick by the ministry, the Assembly reasoned, "much more therefore ought he to perform this in the public execution of his office, as a part thereof."[2] Apart from the obvious practical advantages of the minister's offering prayer in services of public worship and a few proof texts,[3] there is little to indicate how the theory of ministerial re-

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[1] ix.9.

[2] P. 172; cf. Gillespie, An Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland, p. 15; Baillie, Historical Vindication, pp. 6f.

[3] Acts 6:2ff.; 20:36; James 5:14f.; I Corinthians 14:15f.

sponsibility for public prayer became an established part of the worship of the Scottish Church. Indeed, there was neither consistency nor high degree of correlation between theory and practice in the Church's policy on public prayer in the seventeenth century.

Practice.- In the years before a Reformed ministry was established in the Church of Scotland, the Reformers urged the use of regular prayers in every household. In 1556, Knox informed the heads of Scots households that therein they were bishops and kings, having as flock and subjects all the members of the household. The head of the household was responsible for scripture reading, exhortation, and "making common prayers which I would in every house were used once a day at least."[1] As the Reformed Church emerged in 1559-60, there is considerable evidence that the prayers of its public worship, at least in a considerable part of the country, followed the "Second Prayer Book of Edward VI." McMillan cites evidence that this Book of Common Prayer was in use during this period in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Lintrathen (Angus), Peebles, and elsewhere.[2] Because of the shortage of ministers, readers were usually responsible for the offering of public prayer.[3]

About 1560, the Book of Geneva (The Form of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments, etc. Used in the English Congregation at Geneva, and approved by that Famous and Godly Learned

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[1] "A Letter of Wholesome Counsel Addressed to His Brethren in Scotland," Works, IV, pp. 129ff.

[2] Op. cit., 33ff.

[3] Ibid., 136ff.

Man, John Calvin), printed in Geneva in 1556, began to be used in Scottish churches.[1] In 1562, an edition of this book was printed in Edinburgh. The General Assembly directed in the same year that this book be followed for administration of the sacraments, solemnization of marriage, and burial of the dead, but did not require use of its common prayers.[2] Successive editions of the book became known as the Book of Common Order.[3] Two years later, the Assembly prescribed that "every Minister, Exhorter and Reader shall have one of the Psalm books[4] lately printed in Edinburgh and use the Order contained therein in Prayers, Marriage, and Ministration of the Sacraments."[5] From this time forward, use of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer diminished.[6] By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Book of Common Order had been established as the standard for public prayer and so continued until adoption of the Westminster standards.[7] As the Book of Common Order was used by the Church in the first half of the seventeenth century, the responsibility of the reader for public prayer is more prominent than that of the minister. In parishes provided with both reader and minister, the reader was expected to conduct the daily services of common prayer,[8] and to conduct a "reader's service" of scrip-

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[1]Knox, Works, II, p. 186. [2]BUKS, p. 13.

[3]Knox, II, p. 210. [4]I. e., Book of Geneva.

[5]Calderwood, History, II, p. 284; BUKS makes no mention of this enactment.

[6]McMillan, op. cit., pp. 42ff. [7]Ibid., Chap. iv.

[8]Ibid., pp. 136f.

ture reading, prayer, and praise immediately preceding the minister's portion of services that included sermon.[1] There was no hesitation about empowering readers to lead in public prayer. Neither, before the signing of the Covenant, was there apparent any conviction that the authority to lead public prayers should be assigned exclusively to the ministry. The office of reader was intended to be a temporary expedient, "no continuing office," to supply vacant parishes until ministers could be found.[2] In 1581, the General Assembly abolished the office.[3] The readership proved useful and survived until the adoption of the Westminster standards, although the importance and necessity of the reader's office diminished as more ministers became available.

The Westminster Assembly abolished both the reader's service and the office of reader, assigning all responsibility for public prayer to the minister.[4] The "Directory for Public Worship" did away with the services of common prayer, which, they held, were a "great hindrance of the preaching of the word." In some places, they said, common prayers had altogether replaced preaching, because many people felt their attendance at prayers was sufficient religion. The separation of public prayer and preaching, they argued, hardened "ignorant and superstitious people" in their ignorance and made them careless of saving knowledge.[5] The reader's service was shortened and

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[1] Ibid., 127f. [2] MacGregor, op. cit., pp. 47f.

[3] BUKS, p. 219

[4] "Directory for Church Government," p. 173. [5] Pp. 135f.

placed in the hands of the minister. In both of these changes, the Westminster Assembly sought to strengthen and focus attention on the ministry of the Word.

At the Restoration, use of the Westminster "Form of Public Worship" was forbidden. Since no new form of worship was introduced, it was expected that the practice of the Church would again pattern itself after the Book of Common Order. Foster affirms that it was the intention of the Restoration Church to return to the forms of worship "which existed before the late troubles began."[1] It is more probable that the interest of the Church's leadership was diverted from worship to more insistent matters. The Church, in fact, used a variety of forms, including those of the Book of Common Order, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Westminster "Directory for Public Worship."[2]

From the standpoint of pastoral care, the important consideration is that the responsibility of the minister for public prayer lost its precision. Practice was not fixed and theory, so far as can be determined, was not investigated. At the Revolution, the Westminster forms once again became the prescribed standard for theory and practice.[3]

Public Reading of the Scripture

The development of the concept that the minister alone should read the scripture in services of public worship parallels the views of the Scottish Church on the minister's respon-

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[1] Op. cit., P. 130.

[2] Ibid., pp. 129ff.

[3] Cunningham, op. cit., II, p. 185.

sibility for the offering of public prayer. From the Reformation until the end of the first episcopacy, public reading of the scripture was, in parishes provided with readers, largely the responsibility of the reader. The Book of Discipline recommended that in large towns there be, if not sermon, common prayers with reading of the scriptures. One reason given for this emphasis on public scripture reading was that the majority of the people could not read. Too, it was difficult to obtain Bibles for the homes of the common people. The Reformers felt that by frequent public reading of the scripture the gross ignorance of the contents of the Bible, "which in the cursed Papistry hath overflown all, may partly be removed."[1] In addition to these daily services, the Sabbath morning worship included a reader's service, of which the major portion was the reading of the scriptures.[2]

In contrast with practice until the time of its meeting, the Westminster Assembly held that ministers alone could read scripture publicly. It was affirmed that the public reading of the Word, like preaching, was "of a moral nature," and belonged to the pastor's office. Proof was offered as follows:

> 1. That the priests and Levites in the Jewish church were trusted with the publick reading is proved.
> 2. That the ministers of the gospel have as ample a charge and commission to dispense the word, as well as other ordinances, as the priests and Levites had under the law, proved, Isa. lxvi.21, Matt. xxiii.34, where our Saviour entitleth the officers of the New Testament,

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[1] ix.

[2] For details of both daily and reader's services, see McMillan, op. cit., Chap. xi.

> whom he will send forth, by the same names of the teachers of the Old.[1]

It was concluded by the Assembly that "the public reading of the word in the congregation is an holy ordinance in God's Church" and restricted to the ministry, even though "no immediate explication" of the portion read was added.[2]

At the Restoration, the office of reader was re-introduced, and public reading of the scripture was no longer considered assigned to the exclusive jurisdiction of the minister.[3] After the Revolution, Pardovan wrote, "Reading of the Word in the congregation, being a part of the public worship of God...is to be performed by the pastors and teachers, and preachers licensed by the presbytery thereunto."[4] At the present time, the role of the minister in this particular has lost its precision. Any authorized person may now read scripture in public worship.

Pronouncement of the Blessing

Pronouncement of the blessing by the minister was a continuation of the Roman practice of the priest's blessing the people at the conclusion of mass. This formal benediction had not become generally practiced until the later Middle Ages.[5] The Reformed Church maintained the practice, feeling no need, in

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[1] Pp. 172f.

[2] George Gillespie, Notes of Debates and Proceeding of the Assembly of Divines and Other Commissioners at Westminster, Edinburgh: Robert Ogle and Oliver and Boyd, p. 3.

[3] Foster, op. cit., p. 128.

[4] Op. cit., p. 83.

[5] Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p. 178.

the early years of the Reformation, to explain its meaning. The Second Book of Discipline contains the first Scottish apology for ministerial blessing as a part of the minister's pastoral duties. It was explained that the minister is required to bless his people "in the name of the Lord, who will not suffer the blessings of His faithful servant to be frustrated."[1] Like preaching and administration of the sacraments, the bestowing of the blessing was a part of the ministry of the Word of God, for which the minister alone was ordained. George Gillespie, in arguing that elders had many pastoral duties, pointed out that blessing the people was one of the few distinctions between minister and elder, the elder being forbidden to pronounce a blessing.[2]

The Westminster Assembly required the minister "to bless the people from God, giving Numbers 6:23ff., Revelation 1:4, and Isaiah 66:21 as proof texts. It was argued that the names or titles of priests and Levites were continued under the Gospel and meant "evangelical pastors, who therefore are by office to bless the people."[3]

The seventeenth century did not attach to the formal blessing the importance it held later. In fact, some churches had difficulty in keeping the people from leaving the church after the sermon and before the benediction. In 1587, the Glasgow session took steps to stop the practice.[4] Perth experienced the

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[1] iv.9; Cf. Baillie, Historical Vindication, pp. 6f.

[2] Assertion, p. 15. [3] "Form of Church Government," p. 173.

[4] Wodrow, MS "Biography," III, p. 18.

same trouble and directed those persons assigned the task of patrolling the town for absentees during divine services to station themselves at the church doors, "and suffer none to depart out of the kirk before the blessing except they be sick and evil at ease."[1] Robert Blair at Saint Andrews in 1639 found the efforts of the session since 1593 to stop the exodus of the congregation before the blessing ineffective. Instead of further repressive measures, he used guile, asking the prettiest woman and the handsomest man to leave after the blessing.[2]

In 1827, Edward Irving, at the ordination of the minister of the Scots Church, London Wall, gave as the most important part of the work of the minister as pastor (distinct from his duties as student, preacher, churchman, and man), the giving of the benediction unto his flock, "to bless them, men, women, and children, at thy meetings and at thy partings: not with light words, but with a bishop's blessing."[3] Although Irving referred to the practice of giving private formal blessings as "old-fashioned," he did not refer to the seventeenth century.

Practice of Medicine

Nearly all the pastoral labors of the seventeenth century Scottish ministry were aspects of his responsibility to minister the Word of God. It is unexpected to find that some ministers in seventeenth century Scotland used the practice of

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[1] Spottiswood Miscellany, II, p. 271.

[2] Wodrow, Analecta, II, p. 66.

[3] The Collected Works of Edward Irving (5 vols., London: Alexander Strahan, 1864, I, p. 533.

medicine as a means of pastoral care. Alexander Leighton, father of Archbishop Robert Leighton, was both minister and physician, practicing both professions in the early seventeenth century.[1] In the same period, John Strachan, minister of St. Martin's and Cambusmichael was "famous for his skill in physic."[2] James Simpson, minister of St. Brice's, Kirkcaldy (1627-65) was best remembered for his skill in the use of herbs.[3] When Anthony Murray, minister of Coulter, Lanarkshire was deprived in October 1662, he continued to live in the parish, supporting himself with his medical practice. He had qualified as a physician before entering the ministry.[4] John Birnie, minister of Caerlaverock during the 1670's, was skilled in medicine, as well as divinity, law, and history.[5] At Campsie and Antermony, John Govan, the minister, was qualified in medicine and "prescribed for illness, taking no fees."[6] Gilbert Rule, who became minister of Old Greyfriars and principal of the University of Edinburgh after the Revolution had taken the degree of M.D. at Leyden while in exile. In 1679, he went to Berwick-on-Tweed to serve both as minister and physician.[7] Having been deposed from Gordon parish, John Hardie studied medicine, took the degree of M.D. and returned as minister after the Revolution. It is not recorded whether he also continued his practice of medicine.[8]

Something of the desirability, from a pastoral stand-

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[1] E. A. Knox, op. cit., p. 60.

[2] Fasti, IV, p. 248.

[3] Ibid., V, p. 102.

[4] Ibid., I, pp. 245f.

[5] Ibid., II, p. 259.

[6] Ibid., III, p. 376.

[7] Ibid., I, p. 39.

[8] Ibid., II, p. 151.

point, of the conjunction of medicine and the ministry is indicated in a letter, written in 1689, by Robert Fleming, minister of the Scots congregation at Rotterdam, to a Doctor Freer. He urged Freer to continue his study of divinity, arguing that "a judicious divine and physician in one person make a choice hammer for the good of their generation."[1] The only clear statement in the period of study of the reasons for using medicine as a means of pastoral care was expressed by Gilbert Burnet:

> The study and practice of physick, especially that which is safe and simple, puts the clergy in a capacity of doing great acts of charity, and of rendering both their persons and labours very acceptable to their people; it will procure their being soon sent for by them in sickness, and it will give themgreat advantages in speaking to them of their spiritual concerns, when they are so careful of their persons....[2]

This phase of pastoral care in the seventeenth century Church of Scotland, undefined by the Church and limited in practice, would scarcely deserve notice except for the parallel it presents with an aspect of modern pastoral care. In the seventeenth century, when medicine was beginning to emerge as a science, ministers were urged to convince their parishioners of their care for their souls, by their care for their bodies. In the Church of today, while the processes of the mind are beginning to be understood and mental therapy is struggling to achieve the status of a science, ministers are being urged to use the tools of psychology as a means of fulfilling their pastoral responsibilities.

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[1] GRH, Leven and Melville Muniments, MS xiii.241.

[2] Discourse of the Pastoral Care, p. 149.

From the experience in medicine of the seventeenth century Scottish ministry, we may draw two conclusions about the use of psychology by the ministry of the twentieth century. First, the study and practice of psychology by the ministry, "especially that which is safe and simple," may well result in "great acts of charity" and render both the minister and the ministry very acceptable to the members of the minister's community. The minister's concern for the mental well-being of those about him may convince them of his concern for the well-being of their souls. Secondly, it is probable that as the science of psychology developes, need for its practice by the ministry will decline. It must be remembered such sciences become the concern of the ministry only as they further the aims of pastoral care.

CHAPTER IX

THE THEOLOGY OF PASTORAL CARE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

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THE THEOLOGY OF PASTORAL CARE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Calvin and the Westminster Assembly

In the preceding chapters an attempt has been made to explain (1) why the Church considered that a continuing cure of souls was commanded by Christ although it was presupposed that the elect were foreordained to salvation before the creation of the world, (2) what labors were required of the Church to fulfill its responsibilities for the pastoral care of those in its charge, and (3) of what effect these labors were understood to be. In this chapter, there will be explained the basic theology upon which rested the pastoral care of seventeenth century Scotland.

The Scottish Reformation did not initiate but assumed a theology which included a basis for pastoral care. In the Introduction, brief mention was made of some of the major concepts within the thought of Calvin which furnished the framework upon which was mounted the pastoral care of the Scottish Church from the Reformation until mid-seventeenth century. Throughout the period of study, the pastoral theology of the Church of Scotland remained Calvinistic, but at mid-century a new point of reference was established. The benchmark of Scottish theology in the

seventeenth century is the Westminster "Confession of Faith," together with the other documents prepared by that Assembly. Although the Westminster standards may be said to express the theology prerequisite to the pastoral care advocated by the Church of Scotland in the period of study, a more precise statement of the theology directly concerning pastoral care is to be found in the writings of the period which interpret, in terms of pastoral care, the Westminster theology.

David Dickson

An authentic representation of the theology of pastoral care of the seventeenth century Church of Scotland may be seen in the writings of David Dickson, whose ministry began thirty years before the adoption of the Westminster standards. He embraced the doctrines of the Westminster Assembly and continued until 1663 to teach its precepts to the young men preparing for the ministry at the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh. Dickson, whose preaching and counselling ministries have been mentioned above, and Samuel Rutherford were the outstanding defenders of the Westminster theology in seventeenth century Scotland. In Truth's Victory Over Error,[1] Dickson defended the Westminster "Confession of Faith," concept by concept, against forty-two heresies. In other writings, Dickson made the fullest statement to be found in the period of study of the theological principals of pastoral care as they were understood by the seventeenth century Church of Scotland.

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[1]Edinburgh: John Reid, 1684.

The True Comfort of a Christian.- Before the meeting of the Westminster Assembly and while he was minister at Irvine, Dickson wrote The True Comfort of a Christian or Food for a Distressed Soul, a little known duodecimo volume of only fifty pages. The theological portion of the book explained the theory of pastoral care in terms almost identical to those used by Robert Rollock, first principal of the University of Edinburgh.[1] The book, therefore, not only displays Dickson's thought on cure of souls prior to the meeting of the Westminster Assembly, but offers evidence of the essential uniformity of the pastoral theology of seventeenth century Scotland. The book dealt with the treatment of "cases of the soul." These cases, it will be remembered, can be described as any sort of human distress or anguish which may be alleviated by pastoral application of the Word, and offer a parallel with the type of pastoral care expected by the Church of today. In the casuistical manual which comprises more than half the book, Dickson suggected various situations in which an individual might require pastoral care. Solutions to the cases were offered from the Word of God.[2] The purpose of the book was to explain the two divine covenants and how they might be applied to the particular needs of an individual believer.

The Covenants.-

The Covenant of Works.- Dickson began by explaining, in little over a page, the covenant of works. Understanding this

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[1]A Treatise of Gods Effectual Calling, trans. Henry Holland, London: Felix Kyngston, 1603.

[2]See above, pp. 232ff.

covenant, he maintained, is the first step to true religion. By the covenant of works, man was bound by God to perform the requirements of the Law of God[1] in all points, "under the pain of the curse of God for every transgression." "The law is a pedagogue to Christ," Dickson argued, and frequent and serious meditation on the covenant of works will lead the individual to Christ by convincing him that he needs for his salvation more than his own strength or ability to perform the requirements of the Law.[2]

The Covenant of Grace.- Because it is impossible for man to achieve righteousness under the covenant of works, God established in His Son a covenant of grace. The covenant was first announced when God promised that the seed ofnthe woman would tread down the serpent. The promise, referring to Christ, was renewed with Abraham and David.[3] By this covenant, the fullness of God, in the second person of the Trinity, was manifested in our flesh as Jesus Christ to satisfy God's justice and perfect the work of our redemption. God has filled Him with all graces for us, said Dickson, that from Him we might receive grace for grace. The chief grace promised through the covenant was redemption. Faith, Dickson explained, is the only way by which Jesus Christ and all his graces may be received. As Dickson expressed it, "if thou believe the Gospel, and heartily receive Jesus Christ offered to thee, thou shalt become the child of

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[1]Viz., "the law of God and ten commandments," p. 3.

[2]Pp. 3f.

[3]P. 10.

God." The basis of our faith, said Dickson, is the truth of God revealed in the scriptures. Through faith, we must accept the promises made by God in the covenant of grace and not concern ourselves thereafter with our unworthiness as indicated by the covenant of works.[1]

Dickson's next statement requires quotation in full to avoid misunderstanding. Taken out of context, this passage could do grave injustice to Dickson's views on election.

> And to this end weigh with thyself, that the word of God maketh a general offer of Christ, to all men without exception, Joh. 3 v.16.17. Joh. 10 v.19. Luke 2 v.10. From which offer if thou exempt thy self, thou dost wrong both to God and to thy own soul. Secondly, that God commanded all to believe. I Joh. 3.23.[2]

From this passage, it might appear that Dickson, if not an Universalist, was at least an Arminian. The desires or intentions of those to whom Christ is offered would appear to have something to do with their salvation or damnation. Nothing could be farther from Dickson's mind. It is true he believed that Christ is offered to all who hear the Gospel promises. However, he was convinced and often said that when Christ was offered, through preaching, to a mixed congregation of elect and reprobate, the elect would accept the offer and the reprobate would reject it.[3] Although the acceptance or rejection would be understood in terms of human experience, the decision would not be brought about by human volition. Only the Holy Spirit could move the hearer to accept the offer for his salvation or reject it for his damnation.

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[1]Pp. 4f. [2]Pp. 5f. [3]Above, pp. 7ff.

The scripture, Dickson held, promises "every necessary thing" to the believer. Said Dickson, God's promise, "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee," is applied to every believer, for the combat against the common calamities of this life.[1] Dickson listed ten specific things promised to those who believe in Christ: (1) protection and defense against all evil, (2) strength for every good employment, (3) delivery from the voluntary slavery of sin, (4) that all things will work to our good, (5) defense against our foes, (6) "all good things that he promiseth to us,"[2] (7) forgiveness of our sins, (8) partaking of His eternal kingdom, (9) faith itself and the spirit of adoption, and (10) correction by God's visitation.[3] Dickson described this last promise as the most wonderful of all. By this, he meant that the hardships to which the believer found himself subjected should be regarded as the providence of God acting to train him in the indispensability of faith.[4]

In other words, Dickson maintained that the distresses occasioned by temporal circumstances could be resolved by application of the scriptures. The distinction must be made between the circumstances and the distresses caused by temporal circumstances. The Word, Dickson held, was to be applied to resolve distresses or anxieties by relating each of them to the Word and will of God. It did not necessarily follow that the circum-

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[1]p. 7.

[2]Dickson apparently meant temporal good, in the sense of reward described in the wisdom literature of the Old Testament.

[3]Pp. 8ff.

[4]P. 11.

stances themselves were the proper concern of pastoral care. For example, in the case of illness, it was argued that the Word must be applied by the pastor to resolve the spiritual distress occasioned by illness, but there is no indication in the theological understanding of pastoral care that the Church was in any way responsible for healing the illness itself. In fact, there is implied in the conviction that temporal distresses are most valuable means by which God leads men to salvation an understanding of temporal distresses as acts of God with which the Church would be mistaken to interfere. Exceptions may be pointed out, such as the concern of the ministry for physical ills, but most of such exceptions were advocated on practical rather than theological grounds.

Dickson urged his reader to accept and to enter into the covenant of grace and recommended the following procedure:

> If this covenant please thee well and thy heart receive it, both to be saved and sanctified by it, and thou art content to enter into this covenant with the Lord, of purpose to pursue the promises of sanctification no less than the promises of justification and salvation; In a word, if thou say with thy heart to the Lord, Lord, I embrace the offer of Christ Jesus and all his graces, Lord I embrace this gracious covenant that thou offers unto us all in the gospel, that I may be sanctified and saved by it, and will follow unto it by the Lord's grace, believing in his goodness and truth; then blessed art thou, and daily more and more blessed shalt thou be....Thou shalt get a place within Gods house, and an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Thou shalt be joyful in the Lords house of prayer, and thy sacrifice and service shall be accepted of the Lord.[1]

Practical Application of the Covenant of Grace.- Once the believer has entered, as described above, into the covenant

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[1]Pp. 19f.

of grace, it remains only for him to use the covenant in all his life. To draw from Christ, Dickson said, any grace the soul desires, the believer must decide what he needs, then search the scriptures to see if the grace required has been covered by a promise. Having found the promise in scripture, the seeker need only humbly believe the promise and, "in that measure of faith which the Lord bestoweth" upon him, present his supplication in the name of Jesus Christ. He will receive the necessary promised grace, for God cannot fail, in His appointed time, to fulfill the promise.[1]

In this way, Dickson stated the theology upon which was based the "proof text" casuistry so typical of much of the pastoral care of seventeenth century Scotland.

Therapeutica Sacra.- In Therapeutica Sacra, first written as a theological textbook, then translated into English from the Latin of the classroom, Dickson recorded the principles of pastoral care as he taught them at Glasgow and Edinburgh for nearly two decades after the meeting of the Westminster Divines. Cure of souls, he said, mainly dealing with cases of conscience, must be considered the most important application of divinity. As in The True Comfort of a Christian, Dickson stated in Therapeutica Sacra that pastoral care was to be accomplished by a "prudent application and use-making of divine covenants, made about and with man, for his coming into eternal life."[2] As a means of understanding the theory of pastoral care, the later book has the

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[1] P. 20.

[2] P. 1.

advantage of the earlier in that Dickson's discussion of the conscience in Therapeutica Sacra explains much of the reasoning concerning the recipient of pastoral care inherent in the pastoral methods of the time.

The Conscience.- The book began with an analysis of the conscience. Dickson assumed that everyone was possessed of a conscience and that the conscience is operative at all times. The conscience itself is "the understanding power of our souls examining how matters stand between God and us." The conscience compares the will of God revealed in the scriptures "with our state, condition and carriage, in thoughts, words or deeds, done or omitted, and passing judgement thereupon as the case requires."[1] Unless we are to find ourselves judged and chastised by God, we must, through the conscience, examine and judge ourselves. In self-examination and self-judgement, we must consider "our estate," whether we are in a state of nature or of grace. Dickson assumed the traditional significance of these two states of the soul, according to which a soul in a state of grace was assumed to enter heaven as its portion of eternal life, while a soul in a state of nature was believed to be destined for hell.[2] He did not explain the significance of the states of grace and nature in Therapeutica Sacra. possibly believing that the terms were too well known to require comment. However, in his exposition of Job 10:2, he implied that a state of grace

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[1] P. 3; cf. Dickson on Hebrews 5:14.

[2] Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p. 614.

exists when one has no sin unconfessed. Job, he said, did not understand his affliction, "because his sins are daily repented of, and sins repented of are forgiven, and forgiven sins are not brought to account again; and if sin be forgiven, God cannot be his foe."[1] Dickson does explain that "our estate" will be indicated by "our condition." That is, if we are in a state of grace, "our present disposition or inclination of heart and affections will be such as becometh a man reconciled."[2] The nature of this examination is internal, within the heart, but the condition is such that it may also be determined externally, by the examination of our actual deeds, words, and thoughts. In other words, if we are in a state of grace, our deeds, words, and thoughts will be those of a man reconciled. The rule by which we judge our condition is the revealed will of God in holy scriptures, in which are set down what we should believe, what we should do, the reward of obedience, and the punishment of disobedience. Unless the conscience is well informed as to these standards, it may accept the "grossest idolatry" or other error as truth, believing, for example, that "the murderers of the saints do God good service."[3] Without an intellectual understanding of the Biblical precepts concerning divinely prescribed belief, behavior, reward, and punishment, the conscience has neither data nor motivation for correctly judging condition, argued Dickson. From the foregoing, the importance of catechising in the scheme of pastoral care in seventeenth century Scot-

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[1] Select Practical Writings, p. 6.

[2] P. 3; cf. Dickson on I John 3:20f.

[3] P. 4.

land is clear.

Process by Which the Conscience Works.- Once the conscience has been invested with the requisite knowledge from the Bible, it immediately and continuously compares the estate and condition, together with the actual words, thoughts, and deeds of its possessor, with the Biblical standard, and passes judgment upon what is found. The process by which the well-informed conscience renders judgment, said Dickson, is deductive reasoning, "by way of Syllogism." The major or first premise is the rule given by the Supreme Lawgiver. We put ourselves to the rule as the minor premise, Dickson said, "and from the comparison of ourselves, with the rule, we give out sentence in the third room, which is called the conclusion."[1] Having pronounced judgment, the conscience would then, Dickson held, proceed to sentence itself "worthy of what the Law pronounceth against his sin."[2] It then fell to the conscience to execute the sentence it had pronounced, said Dickson, in a manner either "sad and sorrowful" or "joyfull and comfortable," depending on its condition and estate. The penalties imposed by the conscience in case of condemnation were understood to be "shame, grief, anxiety, vexation and such-like."[3] If the conscience found itself to be innocent, that is, that its belief and behavior were in agreement with that prescribed by God - or that it was truly repentant - it was equipped by the Gospel to "absolve the penitent believer fled to

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[1] Loc. cit.; cf. Dickson on Hebrews 11.1. [2] P. 6.

[3] Ibid.

Christ." The sentence executed in this case would be "peace, comfort, joy, gladness, exultation, confidence and such-like."[1] It is to be noted that Dickson spoke of confession and absolution as taking place within the conscience. There is no hint in Dickson's thought of priestly absolution. By confessing their sins to one another, he said in his commentary on the New Testament injunction to that effect, believers mutually succor each other, both by counsel and prayer, so that their consciences and lives might be healed, and through the conscience, eventually receive absolution from God.[2]

Cases of Conscience.- Dickson, although unaware of inhibitions and other psychological factors, realized that a conscience furnished with major and minor premises does not invariably proceed to the predicted conclusion by logical process. He explained divergence from the logical pattern as "cases of conscience" or "diseases of the conscience," the primary concern of pastoral care. A conscience is ill, said Dickson, when it "is senseless of its own evils and dangers it is in and sitteth down securely, and resteth without a warrant," or when it has been correctly wounded and is laboring under the sense of its pain, or is upset by mistakes and ignorance of how to make use of the true remedy."[3] Treatment of such sick consciences is the sacred therapy to which Dickson refers in the title.

Cases of the Soul.- A sharp distinction was made in this book Between "cases of conscience" and cases of the soul." The soul,

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[1] Ibid. [2] On James 5:16ff. [3] P. 8.

Dickson argued, embraced all experience, in contrast with the conscience which served only to judge the relationship between the individual and God. As in The True Comfort of a Christian, a "case of the soul" as described in Therapeutica Sacra could be defined as any sort of human suffering. Dickson said that such human concerns as "losses of things temporal, fears, pains of unexpected inconveniences," might well disturb the soul, but should not necessarily produce a troubled conscience. As an example of an ill case of the soul which included a good case of conscience Dickson cited Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Although Jesus experienced great torment, his conscience did not condemn him. Therefore, there was no reason for an ill case of conscience to exist, in spite of the concurrent ill case of the soul.[1]

Regeneration.- The most important cases of conscience were held to be those involving regeneration. To Dickson, regeneration was the same as the "outward calling by the ministry of the Word." He described the work of regeneration - one in effect with effectual calling - as the work of God's invincible power and mere grace. God, Dickson said, quickens a redeemed person lying dead in his sins by the inspiration of His Spirit which accompanies His Word, and renews him "in his mind will and all powers of the soul." The person is convinced, savingly, of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and is made heartily "to embrace Christ and Salvation, and to consecrate himself to the service

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[1]p. 9.

of God in Christ, all the days of his life."[1] From this description it can be seen that Dickson understood the instrument of pastoral care in cases involving regeneration to be the Word of God, applied by God Himself through various methods recognized as the ministry of the Word, principally preaching and the sacraments. The work of regeneration is performed by God alone, he insisted, so that man can no more "glory in his spiritual regeneration, than in his own natural generation."[2] The responsibility of the minister where the Spirit of God is to bring about regeneration is "to preach up the glory of God's free grace, omnipotent power and unsearchable wisdom." If ministers are to be effective pastors, Dickson maintained, they must live in a sense of their own emptiness, depend upon the "furniture of grace for grace, out of Christ's fullness," and zealously oppose the proud error of man's supposed natural ability for converting himself. By doing these things, ministers will "find the effectual blessing of the Ministry of the Gospel and themselves accepted for true disciples at the day of their meeting with Christ the Judge at his second coming."[3] Before defining with precision the role of the minister in regeneration, let us look at Dickson's understanding of the nature of regeneration.

The Nature of Regeneration.- According to Dickson, the doctrine of regeneration has five basic tenets:

1. The natural man cannot receive the things of the

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[1] P. 10; cf. Rollock, op. cit., p. 1.

[2] P. 11.

[3] P. 12.

Spirit of God because he considers them to be foolishness. Regeneration occurs only, therefore, in the elect man "lying in a state of defection."[1]

2. The Spirit of God convinces the elect man of sin, true righteousness, and judgment, by showing him his duty in the doctrine of the law, his guiltiness under the law, and his inability to satisfy the law.[2]

3. In regeneration, God creates a new life, drawing near hand the humble self-condemned soul, dealing with him by way of moral suasion. God sweetly invites him in the preaching of the Gospel,[3] to receive the Redeemer Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God manifested in the flesh, "that by receiving of Him as He is offered in the Evangel, for remission of sin, renovation of life, and eternal salvation, he may close the covenant of grace and reconciliation with God." To moral persuasion, God has added, said Dickson, effectual operation, and has formed "in the soul a spiritual faculty and ability for doing what is pleasant unto God." Thereafter, the regenerate man "doth formally will and do the good which is done."[4]

4. When the invincible power of God converts a soul, the natural will is preserved and perfected. The natural blindness of the mind is removed so that the man may freely make the right choices. The regenerate man, said Dickson, will freely choose the pearl of great price.[5]

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[1] P. 13.

[2] P. 14.

[3] Cf. Rollock, op. cit., pp. 1f.

[4] P. 16.

[5] P. 17.

5. Although man is passive in the work of his conversion, God has appointed external means for fitting or preparing him for conversion, such as "hearing of the word, reading of it, meditating on it, inquiring after the meaning of it, &c."[1] Since the natural man has the same access as the elect man to these means of preparation, he is without excuse if he does not make use of them.

The Role of the Minister in Regeneration.- Dickson's commentary on the fifth proposition is of great importance to an understanding of the minister's role in the pastoral care of seventeenth century Scotland. The work of regeneration, said Dickson, must be distinguished from the preparation and disposition of the man to be regenerate. By the means of preparation, the subject is made more capable of regeneration, but this external disposition of the man, fitting him for regeneration, "is neither a part nor a degree of regeneration." In the work of regeneration, the Lord is not bound to external preparatory dispositions, but he has bound man to make use of the provided external means of preparation, such as hearing of the Word, catechising, and conference, through which a man may be brought more near unto regeneration. "This preparatory disposition, in order unto regeneration is like the drying of timber to make it sooner take fire, when it is casten into it," Dickson said. Dryness in the timber, he explained, is neither a part nor a degree of burning the timber, but only a preparation of the timber to make it

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[1]Pp. 12f.; cf. Rollock, op. cit., p. 2.

burn more readily when it comes in contact with flame, possibly a long time after drying.

These preparatory exercises are available to all, Dickson maintained.[1] Any man, he held, is able, within human limits, to attend a worship service and hear a sermon preached and see the sacraments administered. He is able to read the scripture, to be taught by catechising, and to take part in personal conference with the minister. God may, said Dickson, use any of these means, as He pleases, to bring about the regeneration of the man. As men are commanded in the preaching of the Gospel to repent and believe in Christ, they are also commanded to make use of the external means in order that they may more fully understand their duty as Christians and how they may perform their duty. Therefore, argued Dickson, "if any man shall refuse, slight or neglect to follow these preparatory exercises, which may prepare him for conversion, he is inexcusable before God and man." Of even graver consequence, according to Dickson, was the fact that by his failure to avail himself of the preparatory exercises commanded by God, the offender became "guilty of rejecting the offer of reconciliation, yea guilty of resisting the holy Ghost."[2] The significance of rejecting the offer of grace in preaching and the other externals of pastoral care is a recurring emphasis in Dickson's writings. He sees this rejection as the unpardonable sin, by which the elect and the reprobate are

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[1]By "all," Dickson means all those within the bounds of the Church.

[2]PP. 17f.

clearly separated.[1]

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Regeneration.- In bringing about regeneration, Dickson maintained, the Holy Spirit performs three special operations. The first is "The humbling of the man in the sense of his sin by the doctrine of the law, and cutting off all confidence in his own worth, wit, freewill and strength to help himself." The second is the "infusion of saving faith, so that Christ is his only ground of rejoicing and glorying."[2] The third is the "upstirring and enabling of the believer in Christ, to endeavor new obedience, and to worship God in the spirit."[3] Although the regenerate man is completely passive in the work of regeneration, Dickson held that he is required to perform three duties which correspond to the three special operations of the Holy Spirit: (1) "He must have no confidence in the flesh;" (2) "He must rejoice in Jesus Christ;" and (3) He must be a worshipper of God, endeavoring to bring forth fruits worthy of regeneration.[4] Assurance of salvation could be had if evidence of all three were found in the same man, although it was not enough to perform one of these three duties without the other two. Even Judas, he pointed out, had no confidence in the flesh. The concept of assurance, by means of the three-part evidence just described is a recurring theme in Dick-

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[1]Cf. Truth's Victory Over Error, p. 70. [2]Ibid., p. 96.

[3]P. 19; cf. Truth's Victory, pp. 113ff.; Dickson on Ephesians 2:10.

[4]Pp. 19f.; cf Dickson on Psalms 4:4f., 14:1ff. 32:11; on I Corinthians 12:31; on II Corinthians 2:19; on Ephesians 4:22ff; on Philippians 2:12f., 3:20; on Hebrews 6:9f.; on James 2:14; on I Peter 2:4ff.; on II Peter 1:10.

son's writings.

Assurance.- How may a man be assured that he is of the elect? The uncertainty experienced by many about their predestination, largely concerning doubts as to election or reprobation was a matter of great importance in Dickson's thought on pastoral care. He emphasised the positive pastoral value of the concept that those effectually called "may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace."[1] Theologically, he insisted, there were no grounds for an individual's fears about the nature of his own predestination, for although there are sure signs of election, there are no definite signs of reprobation. It cannot be determined, he said, so long as life remains, that a man is reprobate. Even the excommunicate, it was argued, may well be one of the elect whom God has not yet seen fit to regenerate. It is possible, too, Dickson held, for a man to be among the elect, but to give no positive sign of his election. It is otherwise with those who show signs of their election, he contended. Those whose election is certain were thus described by Dickson:

> But that man, who daily in the sense of his sinfulness and poverty fleeth unto Jesus Christ, that he may be justified by His righteousness, and endeavoureth by faith in Him to bring forth the fruits of new obedience, and doth not put confidence in these his works when he hath done them, but rejoiceth in Jesus Christ the fountain of holiness and blessedness; That man (I say) undoubtedly is regenerate, and a new creature, for so doth the Apostle describe him. Philip. 3.3[2]

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[1]Westminster "Confession of Faith," xviii.1.

[2]P. 22; cf. Truth's Victory, chap. xviii; Dickson on Romans 10:9, Philippians 3:1, and Hebrews 6:18.

From the description given here of the elect man, it would seem difficult to distinguish between the appearance of the elect man and the ordinary serious church member. Although both would have weaknesses and would experience failures,[1] they would normally be expected to display "strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of assurance."[2]

The Covenants.- The heart of Dickson's thought on pastoral care is his theory on the right application of the three covenants which concern salvation. These covenants were described as the covenant of works, the covenant of grace and the covenant of redemption. Dickson's division of what is usually thought of as the covenant of grace into covenants of grace and redemption, in Therapeutica Sacra is unique in seventeenth century Scotland. Other sources, including Dickson's The True Comfort of a Christian, name only the covenants of works and grace.[3]

The Covenant of Redemption.- The covenant of redemption was made, Dickson explained, between God and Christ, the "God appointed Mediator," in the council of the Trinity before the creation of the world. The benefits to mankind promised by this covenant were not general, but were made available to the elect, to the exclusion of all others.[4] In arguing that the covenant of redemption does not apply to all men, Dickson pointed out

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[1]Westminster "Confession of Faith," xvii.3 [2]Ibid., xviii.3.

[3]Pp. 22f.; cf. Rollock, op. cit.; Westminster "Confession of Faith," vii.

[4]P. 34.; cf. Dickson on Psalms, preface, 2:10ff.; on Romans 10:19-21; on II Corinthians 2:15, 3:3, 4:3f.

that Christ, on the way to the Cross, refused to pray for any other except those given him out of the world and that God has not given "every nation so much as the external means for conversion and salvation."[1] There are many, said Dickson, who are called and not chosen, "to whom the gift of saving faith was not given, nor the power of God to salvation was never to be revealed."[2] Redemption by Christ alone is necessary because the elect are, by nature, under the curse of the Law.[3] They are now "fallen by their own fault, and lying by their own merit in sin and misery, enemies to God, and altogether unable to help themselves."[4] Their redemption and their election are the free gifts of God, given without regard either for what they deserve or for their "foreseen faith or works...but of the mere grace and goodwill of God."[5] Dickson felt that the means of effectually calling the elect "forth from the perishing world,"[6] must be such that those who were not among the elect would have no reason to complain of injustice. That is, he felt that God would not fail to call all those who made use of the means of grace offered. Those who refuse the offer do so of their own free will, and no blame, Dickson maintained, could be attributed to God.

The Means of Calling to Redemption under this Covenant.- The chief means, according to Dickson, of calling men to redemption "is the preaching of the Gospel to all nations, commanding

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[1] P. 37. [2] P. 61.

[3] P. 37. [4] P. 35.

[5] P. 61, cf. Truth's Victory, pp. 72f.; Dickson on Romans 11:6, Ephesians 1:2.

[6] P. 69.

all men, where the Gospel is by Gods providence preached, to repent and believe in the Name of Jesus Christ, and to love one another."[1] The elect, he said, would receive the offer, while the reprobate would refuse of their own free will to obey, and thereby forfeit their claim to salvation.[2] Those who accept the preached offer are to make an "express solemn covenant," by which they agree to submit to the "doctrine and government of Christ, and to seal the covenant by the sacrament of baptism.[3] The covenant of redemption further requires that all who accept the offer band together in the closest possible church-fellowship, so that under the officers of the Church, they may be led on "in the obedience of all the commands which Christ hath commanded his people in the Testament."[4] Through these means of ratifying the covenant of redemption, Christ effectually calls, sanctifies, and saves the redeemed, "leaving all others without excuse."[5]

The Covenant of Works.- The covenant of works was made between God and man, that is, between God and Adam and his posterity, and provided that man would continue in a happy life on condition of perfect obedience to the Law, by means of his natural ability.[6] Death is the penalty prescribed by the covenant for man's failure. Since all men, both elect and reprobate,

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Cf. Truth's Victory, pp. 69f.; Dickson on Romans 2:1f., 11:6; on Ephesians 1:2.

[3] P. 69.

[4] P. 70.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Pp. 71ff.

have sinned and are unable to fulfill the requirements of this covenant, man's salvation must depend on something greater than his ability to fulfill the requirements of the Law.[1] The purpose of the covenant of works is to show us our sinfulness and our need for salvation by other means.[2] Because an understanding of our need is the first step towards regeneration, all instruction in religion must start with the covenant of works.[3]

The Covenant of Grace.- The covenant of grace, said Dickson, is an outgrowth of the covenant of redemption. The contract was procured by Christ between God and man,[4] and provides that all the elect given unto Christ shall be reconciled to God, in due time, and for this purpose grace should be preached to bring about the reconciliation. In other words, this covenant provides the grace by which the benefits of the covenant of redemption may be freely bestowed upon the elect.[5]

Application of the Covenant to Infants.- Dickson insisted that infants born of regenerate parents are included in the benefits offered under the covenant. He could not, he said, explain how the Lord deals with infants before they are able to reason for themselves, in converting them, because there is no mention of this in scripture. The application of the covenant to infants is certain, he reasoned, but the method of applica-

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[1]Cf. Dickson on Psalms 32:1f.; on Romans 11:1; on I Corinthians 1:18ff.; on Hebrews 8:8.

[2]Cf. Rollock, op. cit., p. 17. [3]P. 151. in

[4]Viz., the elect; cf. Dickson on Hebrews 8:8.

[5]Pp. 86ff.

tion must remain among the secrets of God. "It should suffice us," Dickson said, "that God in covenanting with the parents, promiseth to be the God of their children."[1]

The Means of Drawing upon the Grace Offered.- The means of drawing men into the covenant of grace are essentially the same as those used for effectually calling the elect unto the covenant of redemption. The principal means is the external revelation of the will of God set forth in holy scripture and "committed to His servants in the ministry, who should in the preaching of the Gospel," inform each man of his great sin and misery and persuade him to repent and accept "the grace of Christ and put on His sweet yoke of obedience.[2] By taking the yoke of obedience, the elect may show their gratitude for Christ's mercy. Application of the Word convinces the hearers of their sin, the righteousness available in Christ, and inevitable judgment. In declaring these things, Dickson held, the Word becomes absolution to the believer and condemnation to those who refuse to believe it. After the Word has had its effect, it was maintained, the Church should receive all who profess a desire to accept the preached offer, admitting them "into the bond of this covenant of grace," and sealing the covenant, "for righteousness of faith and salvation through Christ," by baptism. All that embrace the covenant of grace must join into the closest possible church-fellowship, said Dickson, where they would be edified by the officers of their congregation. That

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[1]Pp. 88f. [2]Pp. 89f.

the Church should not bar from baptism or membership anyone who professes a desire for the same was argued by Dickson, using the example of John the Baptist, and of the Apostles, who received adherents without formal examination. The Church had, he contended, no right to withhold its fellowship from anyone, since there is no way a man's reprobation can be known. Even an excommunicate might be one of the elect not yet called to repentence by God and needful of the oversight of the Church.[1] As in the case of the covenant of redemption, Dickson stated here that the means of calling men to their salvation must be made available to all men, so that the reprobate may be without excuse, as well as the elect converted. Christ is offered through the preaching of the Gospel to a mixed congregation of elect and reprobate. The elect accept the offer and are converted, while the reprobate reject the offer and thus exhibit their contempt of God and His offer of grace.[2]

Principles of the Application of the Covenants.-

The Work of God in the Effectual Application of the Covenants.- The Lord bestows the good of these covenants by powerfully working on the spirits of the elect hearers, said Dickson, making them understand and believe the scripture, apply the doctrine of sin to themselves, and judge themselves with great fear. God sets the eyes of the elect upon Christ as a possible means of their salvation from sin and death and makes them cast themselves on Christ and believe in Him, consecrating themselves to

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[1]P. 90.

[2]P. 115.

Christ and renouncing the world.[1]

> This divine magisterial and effectual application of real blessings, belongeth to God only, and is the end of all ministerial application, which is of the external means appointed of God, to be made use of by Men, the blessing whereof must be left to God to bestow, on whom, how, and in what measure, and in what time it pleaseth him.[2]

Dickson thus explained that although the application of the covenants seems to depend on such external factors as preaching and hearing of the Word, the significant part of the work of applying the covenants is performed by God, without human participation.

The Ordinary Means of Application.- The external means through which the divine operations described above manifest themselves include the doctrine contained in the scriptures, the work of the ministry, and the worship, discipline, and government of the Church.[3] In spite of Dickson's usual emphasis on the preaching of the Word as the means of effectual calling of the elect, this passage shows that he regarded the other forms of pastoral care practiced by the seventeenth century Church of Scotland as serving, when properly used, the same purpose as the preaching of the Word.

The Use of these Means.- The prudent use of the means of applying the covenants, by pastors and others for the good of the elect was described by Dickson as follows:

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[1]Pp. 148f. [2]Pp. 149f.; cf. Dickson on Romans 9:16.

[3]P. 150.

> The remedy of every sickness of the conscience, must be grounded on the doctrine of salvation set down in Scripture; which doctrine, must, first be known and believed by the party diseased, before he can receive a benefit thereby; And therefore that a prudent application of wholesome and saving doctrine may be made, of necessity the party diseased must be acquainted with the doctrine to be applied unto him, before he can make use thereof to his advantage: for experience teacheth us, how hardly gross ignorants can be comforted, when their conscience is wakened with the terrors of God, because they neither know from the Word of God, the cause of their terror and anxiety wherein they are, nor can they be capable of the remedy of the evil, except they, first be catechised in the heads of saving doctrine, held forth in the Law and Gospel, which instruction can hardly be given or received in a short time; and howsoever, a prudent Pastor must make use of time as it is offered, yet when death is near to the party to be instructed, how little it is that can be expected to be done?[1]

In the description of the use of the means provided for applying the covenants, Dickson's views on the role of the ministry in God's plan of salvation are further explained. The minister, by catechising, preaching, and other pastoral labors, must open up, sharpen, and urge upon his hearers the arguments contained in God's Word, so that they may be convinced of the validity of the message, and at least intellectually persuaded to yield unto them. By God's blessing, this intellectual understanding may be accompanied, internally, by spiritual believing of His Word.[2] The reader will note the similarity of this argument and that of Calvin, who used the figure of the "external minister" and the "internal minister" in describing what takes place when the Word is preached and heard.[3] According to Dickson, the minister's

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[1]Pp. 150f.; cf Truth's Victory, pp. 2, 95; Dickson on Hebrews 5:12.

[2]P. 159.

[3]"Summary of Doctrine Concerning the Ministry of the Word and the Sacraments," vi; see p. 8 above.

message should always be such that sinners will be brought to awareness of their own unrighteousness, indigence, infirmity, and unworthiness, that they should be led to believe in Christ, "and be more and more glued unto him, and grow in the love of him, and rest their souls upon him, as God, one with the Father and Holy Spirit." Too, the minister's message must insist that true believers are to worship God in spirit and in truth, "endeavoring according to their vocation to advance his Kingdom in themselves and others."[1] Here, again, are expressed the three concepts which describe the route to be taken by those who receive pastoral care on their way to salvation: (1) self-renonciation, (2) faith in Christ, and (3) fruits worthy of repentance.

The same pattern is clear in Dickson's description of the proper use of the covenants to be made by an individual for regeneration and coming to Christ:

> 1. The exercise of repentance, or the entertaining in himself of the sense of his natural sinfulness and infirmity to do good, and of the power of inherent corruptions, whereby he may be made more and more to renounce all confidence in himself, and walk humbly before God.
> 2. The exercise of faith, or the daily renewed employing of Christ for grace, and actual help in all things, as his case requireth.
> 3. The exercise of love, or the endeavour of new obedience, flowing from love to God and his neighbor, through Christ.[2]

An Exception to the Westminster Theology.- The pastoral theology of David Dickson is more than typical of seventeenth century thought on the subject. It is the exemplar. However, one exception to the generally accepted pattern must be noted.

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[1]P. 161. [2]Pp. 161f.

Dickson's division in Therapeutica Sacra of what he formerly had termed the covenant of grace into the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace would appear to be a bit of scholastic speculation in which Dickson indulged. Although Protestant scholasticism was not unknown in the seventeenth century, Dickson's division of the covenant of grace seems to have made no lasting impression.

Summary

The theology of pastoral care maintained by the Church of Scotland in the seventeenth century, although complex and involving nearly the whole of Christian doctrine may be summarized as follows. The elect are redeemed by the unchangable decree of God before the founding of the world. In a similar fashion, the reprobate are condemned. This salvation or condemnation is accomplished by God alone and no human effort, however powerful or persuasive, can change the decree. God's justice demands that the reprobate be given ample opportunity to accept His offer of salvation. God's mercy requires that the elect, otherwise condemned to their natural state of sin and blind to their condition, be called to regeneration and new life. Therefore, God calls all men, elect and reprobate alike, through His Word. The elect man, through the grace and work of the Holy Spirit, hears the Word and accepts the offer of Christ. The reprobate, of his own free will declines the same offer of salvation held forth in the Word and is, therefore, guilty of repudiating the Holy Spirit, the unpardonable sin.

Although the effectual calling of the elect is dependent

in no way upon human activity, God has seen fit to use men - especially the ministers of the Word - as the instruments by which he calls the elect and allows the reprobate no excuse. Through the methods of pastoral care - preaching, administration of the sacraments, discipline, the private labors of the ministry, and related activities of the Church - Christ, the Word of God, is truly represented to all.

Not only must the elect be called to regeneration, but because of the weakness of the flesh, the spiritual life of the elect and of the Church must be sustained by the Word through pastoral care.

CONCLUSION

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The Westminster "Confession of Faith" has described the mission for which Christ has commissioned the Church as "the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life."[1] The means specified for accomplishing the task of the Church are "the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God." According to the Scots Confession (1560), the notes by which the true Church of Jesus Christ may be recognized are "the true preaching of the word of God; into the which God has revealed him self to us," "the right administration of the sacraments, which must be annexed to the word and promise of God," and "ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered." In other words, it could be said that the Church exists to minister the Word of God.[2] "The ministry of the Word," therefore, may be interpreted not only to mean those persons ordained to be ministers of the Word, but may be considered to sum up the essential nature and mission of the Church as a whole.

Pastoral care is the system by which the saints are gathered and perfected in this life. The means provided therefor

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[1] xxv.3; cf. G. D. Henderson: "The Christian Church is an institution which regards itself as an instrument in the hand of God for the expression and exposition and execution of His Will with particular reference to matters spiritual, and so for the establishment of His Kingdom," Church and Ministry, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951, p. 9.

[2] Cf. Karl Barth, The Doctrine of the Word of God, p. 98, cited by Henderson, op. cit., pp. 37f.

are the Word, sacraments, and discipline. Therefore, it may be concluded that the mission of the Church, as understood by the seventeenth century Scottish Church, is the cure of souls by means of the Word of God. In the equation of the mission of the Church with pastoral care, two things are implied: (1) that all endeavors proper to the Church must be considered to be pastoral care and (2) that these endeavors derive their significance from their relationship to the Word.

There is much the twentieth century Church can learn from reflection on these concepts. By identifying pastoral care with the mission of the Church, the life of the Church is unified and the significance of the Church as the "body of Christ" is given its proper perspective. The Church, especially through its ministry, has been made the instrument for the expression, exposition, and execution of the Word of God. Insofar as the Church is able, through pastoral care, to make the Word relevant and efficacious, it is, in effect, "the Word become flesh" for the gathering and perfecting of the saints.

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